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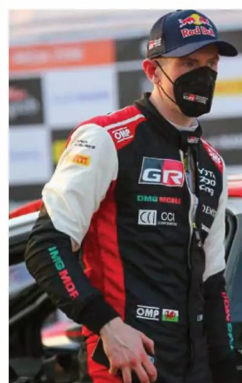


Heartbreak for Welsh Toyota Yaris WRC driver as Ogier steals a march with victory on final stage

EVANS ROBBED AT LAST GASP ON RALLY CROATIA



Ogier now tops the WRC points



Evans left ruing a late slip-up

By Graham Lister

Sebastien Ogier apologised to Elfyn Evans after he beat him to victory on the Croatia Rally by 0.6 seconds last Sunday.

Evans started the event-closing powerstage leading his Toyota team-mate by 3.9s. But he couldn't hold on through the deciding 8.7 miles, taking 4.5s longer than Ogier to complete the test after he lost vital time running wide onto an earth bank with the flying finish just around the corner.

"I said 'sorry' to Elfyn because he's done an amazing job," Ogier said before admitting that he thought his "rally was over" after he was involved in collision with a motorist driving from service in Zagreb to the final leg's opening stage.

The incident left Frenchman Ogier with a battered Yaris WRC, £6000 in fines and a one-event ban, suspended for six months.

But while there was late heartache for Welshman Evans, Northern Ireland's Jon Armstrong scored a maiden Junior WRC victory.

Full report, page 30

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT
**MOTORSPORT
NEWS**

INTERVIEW



READERS'
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TRACK TEST



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COMMENT

Photo: Toyota Gazoo Racing, Jakob Ebrej, Dan Bathie, Motorsport Images



Elfyn Evans came within a whisker of success on Rally Croatia after a fantastic drive

EVANS' DEFEAT IS A MARKER

For a discipline where success is generally measured in seconds rather than tenths, losing a round of the World Rally Championship by just 0.6s has to be a real kick in the proverbials.

But that was the situation that Elfyn Evans had to swallow on Rally Croatia, and, even more galling than an error on the very stage turn of the contest, was the fact that his slip-up handed glory to the sister Toyota Gazoo Racing Yaris WRC of Sebastien Ogier. Ogier himself was recovering after a road traffic accident on Sunday morning. The event certainly provided plenty of drama.

So, on the face of it, this was a rally lost by Evans rather than won by Ogier. But there is plenty of cause for the Welshman to remain upbeat despite the heartbreak. He is, after all, just 10 marks away from the top of the World Rally Championship points standings and there are plenty of events where the ground can be clawed back.

There was a certain humility and maturity coming from Evans after the engines had been switched off too. There were no toys out of the pram and no petulance as might have been expected. Instead, there was an honest assessment of his woes and a determination to keep his chin up and continue to look forwards. It is a mark of the resolve he has built into his armoury and that will help him on his quest for the title.

Rally Croatia made a big impact on its elevation to the WRC's top table in 2021. The Tarmac event drew widespread praise and looks to have secured its place on the roster.

Elsewhere in this issue, we have an in-depth look at how to get started in motorsport, and check out everything from getting a licence, choosing a race series, selecting the right kit and even how to get into the sport through engineering or marshallng. Motorsport is an inclusive world and relies upon enthusiastic competitors and volunteers, and we have it all covered this week.

The incumbent of the readers' Q&A hot seat is Northern Irishman Eugene Donnelly, who has dominated the stages on the Emerald Isle for well over a decade. He talks us through some of his career highlights and reflects on some very near misses.

In this special bumper issue, we also look ahead to the upcoming British Touring Car Championship and Hal Ridge slips behind the wheel of an electric rallycross racer.

Matt James

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RACING NEWS

SHEDDEN BACK WITH A BANG AS HE TOPS BTCC TEST

Team Dynamics man heads the only pre-season group tin-top sessions at Silverstone



Photos: Motorsport Images, Mike Hills Speed Images

By Matt James

British Touring Car Championship returnee Gordon Shedden topped the times at the category's season launch test session at Silverstone last week for Team Dynamics.

The Scotsman, a three-time title winner, is returning to the wheel of a BTCC Honda for the first time since 2017. He had tested the FK8 last season, but his outing at Silverstone last week was the first time he had gone up against rest of the pack. The 42-year-old said he was

thrilled with his day's work after the six hours of running. He said: "We worked diligently through our programme and I gained more and more confidence in the car as the day went on. You never know what everyone else is doing during season launch, but to finish atop the times is mega.

TESTING TIMES

BTCC

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	TIME
1	Gordon Shedden	Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R	57.108s
2	Jack Goff	Team Hard Seat Cupra	57.302s
3	Michael Crees	BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R	57.307s
4	Tom Ingram	Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N	57.382s
5	Jason Plato	Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra	57.485s
6	Colin Turkington	WSR BMW 330i M Sport	57.531s
7	Ash Sutton	Laser Tools Racing Infiniti G50	57.598s
8	Adam Morgan	Cicaley Motorsport BMW 330i M Sport	57.609s
9	Daniel Lloyd	Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra	57.624s
10	Daniel Rowbottom	Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R	57.628s
11	Josh Cook	BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R	57.653s
12	Ollie Jackson	Motorbase Performance Ford Focus	57.658s
13	Chris Smiley	Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N	57.662s
14	Tom Oliphant	WSR BMW 330i M Sport	57.686s
15	Andy Neate	Motorbase Performance Ford Focus	57.700s

I'm definitely happy with that!"

His 57.108s lap time put him two tenths clear of Jack Goff in the brand new Team Hard Cupra R and Michael Crees in BTC Racing's Honda Civic FK8.

Goff said: "That's the quickest I've ever been round Silverstone.

I'm sure other teams have got more to come, so I'm keeping my feet firmly on the ground until [the opening rounds at] Thruxton.

"I honestly still believe we're aiming for top 10 currently – that's where. I realistically want to be."

BRITON RUSSELL SAYS SORRY AFTER IMOLA CRASH

Williams driver George Russell has apologised to rival Valtteri Bottas after the high-speed accident which eliminated them both from the recent Emilia Romagna Grand Prix.

The pair collided when approaching the first chicane at Imola and both machines were heavily damaged during the lap 31 accident. Russell initially vented at Bottas,

declaring the incident to have been the Mercedes driver's fault.

However, the British driver has now recanted his comments post-race. He said: "Having had time to reflect on what happened afterwards, I know I should have handled the whole situation better..."

"I apologise to Valtteri, to my team and to anyone who felt let down by my actions. That's

not who I am and I expect more from myself

"I knew it would be one of our best opportunities to score points this season and, when those points matter as much as they do to us right now, sometimes you take risks."

The race day stewards ruled the crash as a racing incident in which neither driver was predominantly at fault.



Russell has now realised he was in the wrong in F1 crash

IN BRIEF

Williams's son

The Williams team will attempt to undertake 100 pitstops over the course of this weekend's Portuguese Grand Prix to honour Captain Sir Tom Moore and raise money for his 100 Challenge charity pot. The team is hoping that the majority of the halts will be undertaken as practice pitstops. Team head Jost Capito said: "Captain Sir Tom Moore inspired millions around the world, with his simple message of hope 'Tomorrow will be a good day' and brought comfort and joy to so many around the world during the pandemic."

Electric GT series

The FIA has stated its intention to introduce an all-electric GT Championship in the future, featuring cars that are capable of GT3-level speed and will run on permanent circuits. No name for the series or introduction date has been determined yet even though the framework for the 87kw series were nailed down in December last year.

Red Bull's recruit

Red Bull has signed former Mercedes High Performance Powertrains head of mechanical engineering Ben Hodgkinson as it contemplates its own powerplants when Honda quits Formula 1 at the end of 2021. Team boss Christian Horner said: "(Ben) comes to this hugely exciting project as a proven race winner and as an innovator capable of leading a like-minded team of highly skilled engineers."

On the Button

The 2009 F1 title winner Jenson Button could make guest appearances in the revamped DTM in 2022 at the wheel of one of his squad's Team Rocket RJN McLaren 720S machines. The team pulled back from its plans to enter the category this year, but has its eyes set on an entry in 2022. Co-owner Chris Buncombe said: "It's a great series and for any driver it's a great championship to be a part of. So possibly Jenson could race."

Magnussens share

Sportscar veteran Jan Magnussen, 47, will be joined in the High Class Racing LMP2 entry at Le Mans this season by his son, Formula 1 refugee Kevin. Anders Fjordbach will complete the three-strong line-up for the race in August. "It's crazy cool that what we have been talking and dreaming about for many years has suddenly become reality," Kevin Magnussen said. "The Mans is the greatest race in the world and I can't think of a better experience than competing in that race with my dad."



Formula E cars will be back in London later this year

RECORD-BREAKING SEASON PLANNED FOR FORMULA E

Bosch of Formula E have confirmed the remaining races on the 2021 schedule, with the London ePrix confirmed for a layout at ExCeL in the Docklands at the end of July.

The series delayed rubber-stamping the back end of the calendar while there was still uncertainty around travel restrictions due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Now, with the future races confirmed, it means that there will be a record-breaking 15 rounds. The two London races will join double header events at Puebla in Mexico, New

York City and will conclude with a double header at the Tempelhof Airport on August 14-15.

Series official Alberto Longo said: "It's a massive achievement by all to release the full calendar. It includes the most races we've held and shows our commitment to create a schedule that fans and audiences across the world will follow. Four double-header events in Puebla, New York City, London and Berlin are going to set the scene to crown Formula E's first official World champion."

VOLT FARCE TURNS VALENCIA FORMULA E RACE INTO A JOKE

Only nine drivers finished a much-interrupted Formula E opener at Valencia in Spain last weekend when a number of contenders ran out of useable energy.

With five safety car periods in the race, which was held on a damp circuit, the teams were allocated less power with each caution. But most teams miscalculated the distance of the event and only 14 cars were running at the chequered flag. Further, five of the finishers were disqualified for

energy overuse, including Briton Sam Bird and his countrymen Oliver Rowland, Alexander Sims and Alex Lynn. Mercedes man Nyck de Vries collected the win as long-time pacesetter Antonio Felix da Costa ran out of juice.

Andretti Autosport driver Jake Dennis took his maiden victory in the second race of the weekend in Spain as he dominated from pole position to lead every lap. He crossed the line 1.5s ahead.



De Vries took a late win

F1 COMMITS TO THREE MORE YEAR ON THE SUZUKA LAYOUT IN JAPAN



F1 will return to Suzuka

Formula 1 bosses have announced the Japanese Grand Prix will remain at the Suzuka circuit until at least the end of the 2024 season.

F1 chief executive Stefano Domenicali said the three-year extension shows a "long-term commitment to growing the sport in Asia".

"Japan holds a special place in the hearts and minds of F1 fans all over the world, and Suzuka has played host to many of the sport's most legendary moments, with 11

drivers' titles being decided there," said Domenicali.

"The Japanese Grand Prix has always showcased gripping, edge-of-your-seat drama, and I am thrilled we can continue to bring the action and excitement that is Formula 1 to the passionate motorsport fans of Japan."

This year's race, due to take place on October 10, will mark a return to the Far Eastern country after last year's edition was cancelled due to Covid-19.



Button's team adds a third GT4

Photos: Jakob Ebrej

GINETTA TOP TWO TEAM UP IN CENTURY BMW

Last season's Ginetta GT4 Supercup champion and runner-up Will Burns and Gus Burton will partner up in British GT this season as part of Century Motorsport's two-BMW M4 GT4 line-up.

Burton, 18, with Century finished second in his debut 2020 Supercup championship season, and now joins his vanquisher Burns in a Silver-Silver pairing. While Andrew Gordon-Colebrooke joins Chris Salkeld in the sister BMW.

Gordon-Colebrooke, who won British GT4's 2020 Silverstone finale, starts his fourth consecutive season with Century while 2019 G40 Cup champion Salkeld joined the team for the last two rounds of 2020's Supercup.

Both of Century's BMWs have had a complete winter rebuild that's enabled a fully upgraded EVO homologation package to be installed. Century took 2018's British GT4 drivers' and teams' title double and aims to repeat the feat this season.

Team manager Nathan Freke said: "To have the Ginetta Supercup champion and vice champion together is simply awesome and they are going to be a force to be reckoned with. Having worked with Gus last year, I can say he is one of the brightest talents I've ever worked with."



Ginetta Supercup rivals unite



Balfe adds GT4 to its attack

BROWN AND MARSHALL ENSURE BALFE MULTI-CLASS BRITISH GT ENTRY

Balfe Motorsport will this year compete in both British GT's GT3 and GT4 contests after confirming Jack Brown and Ashley Marshall will race a McLaren 570S GT4.

The Silver Cup duo join Balfe's already confirmed GT3 father-and-son entry Stewart and Lewis Proctor.

Brown sat out last season after finishing second in 2019's Ferrari Challenge Europe Trofeo Pirelli Am standings. He said: "I love the driving, but I have many other things to do outside of racing. The business is very important to me and I don't want the car to turn into my office. But yes, the racing does give me a great buzz, nothing comes close."

Marshall meanwhile graduates after five seasons in Ginetta GT5 Challenge. He said: "Joining a team as successful as Balfe Motorsport running a great brand like McLaren makes it extra special. I'm about to compete in what is probably the most competitive GT4 championship in Europe. It feels very much the right step. We'll be close in terms of pace as a driver pairing and I can only see lots of positives."

COLLARD AND KELL JOIN BRITISH GT FORCES AT BUTTON'S RJN TEAM

Two frontrunners from last year's GT4 contest in British GT now are a driver pair at the title-contending squad co-owned by Jenson Button



Collard just missed out on last year's British GT4 title

By Graham Keillor

Last year's British GT4 runner-up Jordan Collard and fellow category frontrunner James Kell will combine in this year's British GT championship driving a third GT4 Team Rocket RJN McLaren 570S.

The team had already announced two GT4 entries for McLaren Driver Development Programme members Katie Milner, Alain Valente, Michael Benyahia and Harry Hayek.

Collard, the son of reigning British GT3 champion Rob,

moves from HHC Motorsport where he finished a close second in last year's GT4 standings, missing out on the title only when his McLaren was passed with 10 minutes remaining in the finale. He was also a DDP member in 2019 when racing with Tolman Motorsport.

Kell made his British GT debut last year in Speedworks' freshman Toyota Supra GT4 effort, and also was a frequent frontrunner.

Team Rocket RJN, the squad co-owned by Formula 1 champion Jenson Button, last year in its own debut campaign

was a regular overall British GT victory contender with Michael O'Brien and James Baldwin driving a GT3 McLaren.

Kell said: "It was a boyhood dream of mine to drive and be involved with McLaren, and Jenson was my idol growing up. I'm really looking forward to working with such an experienced team of professionals and looking forward to an amazing season and beyond."

Team principal Bob Neville added: "I have no doubt we have a great line-up to be able to fight hard for this championship."

TEAM PARKER BRITISH GT PORSCHE 911 TO GET GT CUP DEBUT

British GT champions Scott Malvern and Nick Jones will give their new Team Parker Racing Porsche 911 GT3 its first race run-out this weekend in GT Cup's Brands Hatch round.

The 2018 GT4 Pro-Am title-winning duo graduated to British GT3 last year and won at Donington Park, but more generally struggled with their Bentley so switched to the 911 for this year's contest. They now take the opportunity to run on the

Brands GP layout that hosts next month's British GT opener.

Several of Jones and Malvern's 2021 British GT3 rivals competed in GT Cup's Donington curtain-raiser earlier this month, including new WPI Motorsport Lamborghini Huracan pair Phil Keen and Michael Igoe, as well as Team ABBA Mercedes duo Richard and Sam Neary who won three of the four Donington races.

Jones said: "It will be more of a

test day for us because we want to get the track time for British GT coming up a few weeks afterwards as you don't get many chances to properly run on the Grand Prix circuit."

Malvern added: "The 911 GT3 R is a finished product and what you'd expect from Porsche. We've had a few days in the car but lots of that has been system checks and things like that. However, I am really happy with the car and where we are."



Team Parker's new 911 to get early Brands GP running

KNOCKHILL RENAMES SEASON-OPENER AFTER POPULAR LEGENDS RACER MCCOSH



Popular McCosh being honoured by Knockhill club

The Knockhill Motor Sports Club will pay tribute to the late Legends racer Gerard McCosh by renaming its June 19-20 season-opening meeting the Gerard McCosh Trophy Meeting.

McCosh, who died earlier this year, raced in Legends since its creation in Scotland almost 20 years ago and was a highly popular figure. Legends racers will also be carrying a tribute sticker bearing McCosh's racing

number at every race in 2021.

KMSC club chairman Stuart Gray said: "[McCosh's] effervescent smile lit up whenever you spoke to him and his enthusiasm for racing and his fellow competitor was without match. We hope that the naming of this meeting will ensure his memory will be ongoing."

Scottish Legends Racing's Andrew Donald added: "Gerard was a one off. His commitment to racing was total but he would

party as hard as he raced. It is great that the KMSC are renaming the event as the Legends championship is having a 'phoenix moment' with numbers rising to the glory days of the past. I have not seen interest like this in years. We could easily see 15 to 20 cars."

The Legends Cars National championship kicked off its season last weekend at Cadwell Park with a bumper 32-car entry in place in advance.



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RACING NEWS

BRITISH F4 CHAMPION BROWNING MOVES TO GERMAN ADAC F4

Teenage star switches to international competition with successful team headed by F1 star Ralf Schumacher



Browning heading to international contest



Browning claimed last year's British F4 crown at Brands

By Graham Keillon

Reigning British Formula 4 champion Luke Browning is moving to international competition in 2021 after confirming he'll race in German ADAC F4 with US Racing.

The Cheshire 19-year-old secured the British F4 crown in a dramatic Brands Hatch finale last November, and now moves to the German category with the US Racing team that is headed by Formula 1 star Ralf Schumacher and ex-HWA DTM boss Gerhard Ungar.

US Racing is one of the most successful teams in ADAC F4, taking the title in the category's inaugural year in 2015 as well as in 2018 and '19.

And Browning, alongside his full

season in Germany, will also this year contest selected Italian F4 rounds, with the details of those to be confirmed.

The seven-event German season starts at the Red Bull Ring in June and also visits Zandvoort, the Nurburgring and Hockenheim. And Browning with his move follows in the footsteps of Lando Norris who competed in ADAC F4 in 2015 with Berlin-Brandenburg eV, taking a single win.

Browning said: "I am so happy to finally announce that I will be driving for US Racing in ADAC Formula 4. I love working with the team, and have already done some tests together. I now feel well prepared for the upcoming season opener."

Schumacher added: "Luke is a structured and focused race driver with great potential."

CHAMPION ASHTON RETURNS WITH ROVER 216

MG Trophy champion Andrew Ashton raced for the first time in two years last weekend debuting a Rover 216 GTI in the 750 Motor Club's Hot Hatch Cadwell Park meeting.

Ashton, who more recently raced in the MG Metro Cup, took at class win at Cadwell then finished fourth in race two following lap-one difficulties. Ashton isn't available for every 2021 Hot Hatch round, but may also make an MG Cup appearance with his Rover this year. "I've always since I was a child watched the Rover Cup cars on Duke videos," he told Motorsport News. "I'd [always] loved to have had a race one so when that came up we just had to get it. Just wanted to prove a point that it can be competitive. I think it's already proven that it is."

"My gut instinct tells me that, based on what it was so far, it could possibly get quite close to the sharp end in [MG Cup]. We've had it about two-and-a-half years. It's slowly developed, it's now much more refined. We haven't quite squeezed all the ponies out the engine so far."



Ashton was back in Rover at Cadwell



A-Ones to again hit an F1 weekend

REVOLUTION TROPHY TO SUPPORT FORMULA 1 AGAIN AT ITALIAN GP

The Revolution Trophy and Sports Prototype Cup will later this year provide Formula 1 support races for the second time, this time at Monza's Italian Grand Prix on September 10-12.

The series, which launched in 2019, had two undercard races at last October's Portuguese Algarve F1 meeting, and

is now set for another double-header at Monza.

The Revolution Trophy, for the high-performance Revolution A-One, races within the Sports Prototype Cup. Its 2021 season starts at Silverstone on May 29 where it will share a grid with an open class featuring LMP3, Group CN, Radicals and historic Le

Mans cars in a celebration of prototype racing.

Series promoter James Bailey said: "Our debut Formula 1 support race last year was a resounding success. Monza provides our customers with a rare opportunity to race on one of the most famous grand prix tracks in the world, in front of the tifosi."

BRSCC LAUNCHES NEW TIN-TOP ENDURANCE CUP CONTEST

The British Racing and Sports Car Club has launched the SuperSport Endurance Cup series for tin-tops, starting with a Snetterton event this July ahead of a full 2022 programme.

The brand-new category will have six classes using a power to weight-based structure. This is to provide access points for most club-level racers, with the top classes suitable for the likes of TCR cars, Ginettas and ex-BTCC machines, while its mid classes should attract the likes of BMW M3, Clio Cup,

VW Cup and Civic Cup cars.

The series will also have multiple driver options, refuelling and mandatory pitstops. Race durations will vary from 90 minutes to three hours, with the inaugural race - taking place on the Snetterton 300 layout on July 31 - being allocated 1 hour and 40 minutes.

BRSCC's head of formulae development Greg Graham said: "The addition of a longer endurance racing series to our portfolio is one that our members have been requesting."



Eligible cars include TCRs

FENDER FINDS FORM IN FINALE WHILE NAUJOKS CLAIMS GT4

There was no stopping Angus Fender as he dominated the British GT esports championship finale at Donington Park. Even with 10kg of success ballast on his Century Motorsport BMW M6, there was no stopping poleman Fender as he ran out an easy winner.

"The first stint was about fuel, tyre and brake management,"

he explained, "but the second stint was fun."

As Fender annihilated the opposition, Michael O'Brien in his Team Rocket RJN McLaren 720S ran second, his task eased by Sandy Mitchell coping a drivethrough penalty for a jump start in his Barwell Motorsport Lamborghini Huracan.

That allowed Ben Green up to third but a slow stop

for fresh tyres dropped him to sixth, and his recovery charge was blunted when he was assisted into the Old Hairpin gravel by a backmarker. That ensured third for Jody Fannin in his JMW Ferrari 488.

James Baldwin, who clinched GT3's title in the previous round, didn't trace at Donington due to other esports commitments.

Nils Naujoks, with no

ballast on his G2 BMW M4, took the GT4 title at Donington with his second win of the season. His nearest challenger Jack McIntyre in a Zansho Rocket Simsport Porsche 718 Cayman finished second in the race and the championship. Naujoks, who finished no lower than fourth all season, won the title by 17 points.

David Addison

RESULTS

1 Angus Fender (BMW M6 GT3); 1h00m17.785s; 2 Michael O'Brien (McLaren 720S GT3); 1h0.503s; 3 Jody Fannin (Ferrari 488 GT3); 4 Bobby Trundle (Aston Martin Vantage GT3); 5 Sandy Mitchell (Lamborghini Huracan GT3); 6 Tom Canning (Aston Martin Vantage GT3); 7 Ben Green (BMW M6 GT3); 8 Jack Lemmer (Lamborghini Huracan GT3); 9 Nils Naujoks (BMW M4 GT4); 10 Jack McIntyre (Porsche 718 Cayman GT4).

Class winners: Fender and Naujoks.

STANDINGS

PTS	DRIVER	PTS
1	James Baldwin	95
2	Angus Fender	79
3	Jody Fannin	35
4	Michael O'Brien	52
5	Ben Green	47
6	Morgan Short	32
7	Sandy Mitchell	32
8	Tom Canning	26
9	Bobby Trundle	26
10	Alex Barncroft	22
11	James Baldwin	10
12	Michael O'Brien	10
13	Jack Lemmer	10
14	Ben Green	10
15	Jack Lemmer	10
16	Jack Lemmer	10
17	Jack Lemmer	10
18	Jack Lemmer	10
19	Jack Lemmer	10
20	Jack Lemmer	10



Naujoks (l) and Fender took wins

RALLY NEWS

CHAMPION IN HOT WATER AFTER CRASH ON ROAD SECTION

Sebastien Ogier was hit with fines totalling £6000 and a one-event ban, suspended for six months, following a road accident on the final morning of the Croatia Rally.

Ogier's Yaris WRC was in a collision with a BMW driven by a member of the public. Footage of the incident and subsequent attempts by a policeman to stop Ogier from leaving the accident scene, quickly circulated on social media.

"I was very glad nobody was injured," Ogier said. "Of course, there was a bit of confusion in the moment because we discussed for a while and explained the whole situation. At some point one of them gave me the signal to go and then his colleague said 'no' so you can see this video. Definitely I am not someone who runs away. After the incident I just checked all was OK and we gave our licences. We can be glad it's only car damage."



Ogier had a road accident



Evans lost out by less than one second on Rally Croatia

OGIER PRAISES EVANS'S PACE AS POWERSTAGE DECIDES RALLY CROATIA

Toyota Yaris WRC team-mates battle to the very end on dramatic Tarmac event

By Graham Lister

Elfyn Evans's wait for a WRC win in 2021 goes on following a dramatic conclusion to Croatia's first World championship rally last weekend.

Evans fought his way back into contention on the final morning but lost out to World champion Sebastien Ogier on the event-deciding powerstage by 0.6s.

Afterwards, Ogier praised his team-mate and admitted he thought he hadn't done enough to beat the Welshman to the win.

"I didn't believe it was possible [to win] anymore," said Ogier. "But you also know that I never give up and always try. I wanted to at least defend my second place

and score maximum points in the powerstage, that was my plan. But I told myself it was not enough because Elfyn was just flying on the first pass through in the morning. But this stage was just crazy. At the end we just made it for 0.6s, which is just nothing. Of course, in the moment I feel for Elfyn because he has done an amazing job this weekend. When you have done such a close finish you have only one winner. He was very close to do the same this weekend."

Evans said: "I just got onto the loose and completely missed the next corner and one second was gone. That's a shame but it was a big fight all weekend and hats off to Seb for that last stage. Next time."

A watching Toyota team boss Jari-Matti Latvala, who lost out on winning the Jordan Rally to Ogier in 2011 by 0.2s in the WRC's closest finish to date, said: "It was amazing to see them fighting but there is nothing you can do, you can't react, you just have to wait and see what comes and your heart is pumping."

Ogier's victory, his second of the season, puts him to the top of the drivers' standings, eight points ahead of Thierry Neuville. Evans is two points down on the Belgian and is set to start the opening leg of the all-gravel Rally Portugal behind both when he could potentially gain from a slightly more advantageous road position.



Best of rivals: Winner Ogier (l) and beaten Evans (r)

PORTUGUESE OUTING FOR INGRAM AS HE PREPARES FOR WRC COUNTER

Chris Ingram has confirmed Rally Portugal as his next WRC event and will contest the opening round of the country's national championship this weekend in preparation.

The 26-year-old began his WRC3 bid with fifth place in class alongside Ross Whittock on the Croatia Rally.

"It's mega to get straight back in the car and on gravel," Ingram told Motorsport News. "Hopefully we'll get a better feeling on gravel and get good preparation for Portugal."

Rally Portugal takes place from May 20-23 with Rally Terras d'Aboboreira scheduled from April 30-May 2. The event replaces the postponed Azores Rallye on Ingram's roster.



Ingram will get more miles

FIRST-STAGE ACCIDENT KNOCKS ROVANPERA OFF COURSE



An early mistake meant Rovanperä was left pointless

Kalle Rovanperä's stint as the youngest WRC points leader lasted for less than one stage of the Croatia Rally.

The Finn crashed out on the first stage and was unable to restart on day two due to the severity of the damage to his Yaris WRC. "It was quite near the end of the stage, the last downhill section, which was

really slippery and I was quite understeering with the car for most of the stage," the 20-year-old Rovanperä said. "I just came into the corner, did my braking and tried to go into the corner but I lost the car already in the entry of the corner. I never made the proper racing line and that's why we [went] straight off."

Toyota team chief Jari-Matti

Latvala said: "Let's say Kalle is a young gun, he has the speed, but he doesn't have so much experience in the World Rally Car and he was a bit too fast for that experience."

"He will have a nice road position for the gravel rallies and we will see him fight back. This is rallying and anything can happen."

FOURMAUX IMPRESSES WITH M-SPORT PACE IN CROATIA

Adrien Fourmaux is set to play the waiting game in his bid to land more World Rally Car drives for M-Sport.

The Frenchman created a strong impression on his WRC debut in a top-of-the-range machine, backed by Red Bull, on the Croatia Rally, finishing fifth overall and twice recording top-two stage times.

However, Motorsport News understands that Finn Teemu Suninen will return to an M-Sport Ford Fiesta WRC for next month's Rally Portugal – when he will partner Gus Greensmith at the British team – after the Finn effectively swapped seats with

Fourmaux to drive his Fiesta Rally2 in Croatia.

"I'm really, really happy about our weekend, just a bit disappointed for one thing that the rally is finished now," said Fourmaux, who gave up a career in medicine to become a rally driver four years ago. It was an incredible weekend for us. I think we had an amazing pace in some stages, what a weekend. I don't know [when we will be back in the car]. You will have to ask M-Sport."

Although M-Sport team chief Richard Millener would not reveal details of Fourmaux's next World Rally Car appearance, he praised his efforts.



Fourmaux finished fifth

"It's been a very impressive debut, and you can certainly see a resemblance to [Sebastien] Ogier in the way he conducts himself," said Millener. "The future of the sport is looking pretty good, and I'm really looking forward to seeing how he progresses with more time in the car."

CREIGHTON PLEASED WITH CONTROLLED DRIVE IN ZAGREB

William Creighton reckoned the Croatia Rally was the "toughest" event he's ever done following his Junior World Rally Championship debut on the Zagreb event last week.

The Motorsport Ireland Rally Academy driver finished fifth in JWRC behind winner Jon Armstrong (see Rally Croatia report, p30). "There were a few

bits where I could have gone a bit faster, I was just a bit cautious under the trees where it was a bit slippery," he said. "Apart from that it was quite controlled."

"I have learned so much during this week, it's probably the toughest rally I have done. "The race was really tricky with some long nights looking at the onboards too."

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RALLY NEWS



Bell: Iberian challenge BELL TEAMS UP WITH PARRY TO HEAD TO PORTUGAL

Former Junior WRC driver Ruairi Bell will start his first event with new co-driver Gareth Parry this weekend as the pair contest a one-off round of the Peugeot Rally Cup Iberica.

Bell completed a full Peugeot Iberica season in 2019 alongside old co-driver Darren Garrod but that was in a 208 R2. He will drive the new Peugeot 208 Rally4 this weekend on Rali Terras d'Aboboreira.

"We've been given this amazing opportunity from PT Racing in Portugal which is a no-brainer," Bell told MN. "We can go and achieve what we want to achieve in terms of working together and getting fantastic experience out in the Peugeot Cup."

Bell said he and Garrod are still on "amazing terms" but with commitments alongside Matt Edwards in the BRC and Estonian Roland Poom in ERC, a new co-driver was needed.

"That's going to be quite exciting," Bell added. "Darren's a fantastic man and he's top of the chop, he knows everything. But also getting a new co-driver will help me understand some more things because just like anything, a different opinion is always valuable."

Parry – a member of the Motorsport UK Academy – is similarly enthused: "It's brilliant that we've managed to get this new partnership off the ground. It's a privilege to be given the opportunity to work with Ruairi and the team with such vast experience."

Bell and Parry's full 2021 plans are expected to be revealed soon.

BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP'S NATIONAL DIVISION ATTRACTING STRONG INTEREST

Struggling class bolstered by big increase in entries for 2021 competition

Photos: Martin Walsh, Jakob Ebrej

By Luke Barry

Motorsport News understands that almost 10 competitors have so far registered for the BRC National Championship, a huge increase over previous years.

The first season back in 2016 peaked at nine starters on certain events but numbers have tailed off dramatically since then with just one driver – Alan Carmichael – starting the 2020 Cambrian Rally; the last round to run.

All cars with a Motorsport UK vehicle passport, including World Rally Cars up to 2016 and R5s that are right-hand drive or running bigger turbo restrictors, are eligible.

Carmichael is back again this season in a recently purchased Hyundai i20 R5. He said: "I really want to race people and it's looking like there will be a good entry for it so it should be a great craic.

"I used to be out there pushing like mad and getting quite stressed about it all, but I wasn't enjoying it much and was taking it way too seriously. Now I just enjoy every stage. I know my limits and I'm just out for fun, but I certainly want to take the title."

Triple champion John Morrison will also be back, this time in a Ford Fiesta R5 instead of a Mitsubishi Lancer E9, with Allan Smith (Honda Civic) another to confirm his registration for 2021.

Morrison told Motorsport News: "I think part of the problem before was drivers are hellish for not reading the regulations and I'm not so sure a lot of people understood what they were able to.

"I think this time around perhaps there has been a bit more clarity on the situation where drivers are saying 'oh right, that's worthwhile doing.'"



BRC National has an entry boost

ARGYLL RALLY SET TO GO AHEAD

The opening round of the Scottish Rally Championship the Argyll Rally is set to go ahead as intended on June 25-26 subject to the Scottish government permitting two people to compete in a car together.

Event organisers had set themselves a deadline of Monday this week (April 26), two months before the rally, as to whether to commit to running or cancelling. But support from the local council has convinced Mull Car Club to go ahead.

Regulations will be available on Saturday May 1 and

entries open a week later.

Switching to asphalt for the first time, the Argyll Rally will comprise of 13 stages totalling around 68 competitive miles including two runs through the town centre of Dunoon on the opening evening, the like of which has only really been seen with Ramsey on the Manx Rally and Duns on the Jim Clark.

Clerk of the course Chris Woodcock told MN: "It's hugely important to the town as being effectively a tourist town, they've had very little income over the last 12 months. And all the businesses

who will be affected by the town centre stage have been very supportive even though they'll have to close for a few hours during their busiest time of the week. They can see the opportunities for before and afterwards to take advantage of it."

MN understands there has been strong interest in the rally from the likes of Ireland as well as the SRC regulars. After Argyll, the SRC schedule should include the Scottish, Grampian Forest, Galloway Hills and Carlisle Stages Rallies.



Argyll will switch to Tarmac, echoing Jim Clark



Irish governing body has supported 2020's axed events

MORE THAN €250,000 ISSUED TO IRISH MOTOR CLUBS

Motorsport Ireland has published a summary of the awards made under the "Club Resilience Fund" that was set up following a Sport Ireland grant of €255,000.

The application was for club activity payments (March-December 2020) and losses due to cancelled events, nine of the 34 clubs did not apply. The Cork Motor Club, which

had to cancel the 2020 West Cork Rally less than 48 hours before it was due to start, was duly awarded the largest amount – €28,035.56. Its event was a round of the British Rally Championship, the Irish Tarmac Championship and the Southern 4 series.

The Raven's Rock Rally run by the Carrick on Suir Motor Club received

€26,792.45. It had planned to run on October 11 last year, but was informed by its local authority on the Monday prior to the rally that it would not be granting the necessary road closing.

Donegal Motor Club received €15,854.66 while the Killarney and District Motor Club, organiser of the Rally of the Lakes that was scheduled some

six weeks before Donegal was awarded €6,292. The Wexford Motor Club benefited to the tune of €11,863.72.

Part of their application form included a section titled "Investment in the 2020 Autosport Show". MI dispensed €172,834.32 and MN understands consultations with Sport Ireland are set to discuss the €82,165.68 discrepancy.

LAST CHANCE JUNIOR BRC SALOON FOR PEUGEOT 208 DRIVER WHITE

Rising Northern Irish driver Kyle White believes that he is ideally equipped to win this year's Junior British Rally title, stepping up from the Irish Forestry series.

White is targeting success in the hope that it could land him the

€100,000 Billy Coleman Award and a place in the Motorsport Ireland Rally Academy that comes with it. He admits that a lot is riding on this season because of his age.

"This is my last chance to enter the category," the 25-year-old said.

"The JBRC is offering a once-in-a-lifetime prize and this is my last and only chance now to enter the category."

White will start all seven rounds with Sean Topping in a Peugeot 208 R2, becoming the first non-

Ford Fiesta driver to cement their plans. He will bid for a chance to compete on a round of the WRC in a Hyundai i20 N Rally2 in 2022. Finlay Retson, David Kelly and series newcomer Elliot Payne are among his rivals.



Pressure will be on White in 2021

IDE LINES UP FOR FULL WORLD RX CHALLENGE

Former endurance racing driver Enzo Ide, who spent time in a medically induced coma following an accident at home in 2019, will compete in the full World Rallycross Championship this season.

Belgian driver Ide returned to rallycross returned last year following his recovery. He is remaining with the now-rebranded EKS JC team, an amalgamation of the EKS and JC Raceteknik teams, to race an Audi S1 Supercar in both the RallyX Nordic and World RX seasons in 2021.

"I dreamed of racing in two full championships, but due to different circumstances it wasn't possible," said Ide. "I'm very happy to be able to drive a full season in both the World championship and RallyX Nordic together with EKS JC this year in my Audi S1 EKS RX."

"I know it will be tough, because only the top drivers compete in World RX. We have started testing and it's very exciting to be back in a rallycross car. I want to take this opportunity to thank both Joel [Christofferson] and Mattias [Ekstrom] for believing in me. Without them, this would never have been possible."



Ide wants a challenge in World RX



M-SPORT MAN PARRY-JONES PASSES AWAY

Richard Parry-Jones, the engineering might behind the Ford Focus and Mondeo road cars, who died in an accident at his farm in Wales earlier this month, played a key role in M-Sport's WRC success with Ford.

That's according to M-Sport boss Malcolm Wilson, who told Motorsport News that his Cumbria-based firm has a lot to thank the Welshman for.

"I was extremely saddened to hear of Richard's passing," Wilson said. "M-Sport has a lot to thank him for and I will never forget the support he gave – not only during his time at Ford, but also following his retirement."

"A rally man through and through, Richard was instrumental in forging the relationship between M-Sport and Ford and many of our successes have been thanks to his involvement. He was a big supporter of rallying at all levels of competition and will be greatly missed throughout the sport."

Parry-Jones, who was a regular on BTRDA events for a time in a Ford Fiesta ST, supported Elfyn Evans during his early career.

OLYMPUS JOY FOR HYUNDAI JUNIOR MCERLEAN

Irishman lands a rostrum finish on famous American rally

By Luke Barry

Hyundai Motorsport junior driver Josh McErlean scored the first-ever overall podium and stage win of his senior rallying career on the Olympus Rally in America last weekend.

McErlean and fellow Motorsport Ireland Rally Academy driver Callum Devine both contested the third round of

the American Rally Association National series last week to build up seat time.

Up against the likes of Travis Pastrana and Ken Block in more powerful Subaru machinery, McErlean was an early fourth before being elevated to third when Brandon Semenuk crashed out on the same 18.6-mile stage that McErlean sensationally managed to win. Devine was less lucky on his

maiden outing with a Ford Fiesta Rally2, struggling with an engine problem throughout the event before eventually retiring early on the second leg.

"To be on a podium with Ken Block and Travis Pastrana, it's quite surreal," McErlean told MN. "They're childhood heroes so it was pretty crazy to stand beside them and get pictures."

"Going into this rally the leash was let off a bit from Motorsport

Ireland Rally Academy," he added. "We had to get to the finish of a lot of rallies last year, but we decided to go into this rally and really prove that we have good pace on gravel. That was proven with the stage win so it's good moving forward, it gives you good confidence."

McErlean flew from Washington to Amarante in Portugal on Monday for Rali Terras d'Aboboreira; the

opening round of the Portuguese championship which takes place this weekend.

He will compete against fellow Hyundai junior Ole Christian Veiby, Chris Ingram and Irish compatriots Cathan McCourt, Jason Mitchell and Pauric Duffy as well as local Portuguese drivers. Noel O'Sullivan replaces Keaton Williams in the co-driver's seat on a one-off basis.



McErlean was blown away by his result in USA

DURDIN PLOTS FULL CAMPAIGN IN SUZUKI SWIFTS IN BRITISH RX IN 2021

Former Junior Rallycross champion Bradley Durdin will return to rallycross full time this year, reverting back to the single-make Swift Sport category within the British Rallycross Championship.

Driving a Peter Gwynne Motorsport-run 1300cc Swift, Durdin claimed the Junior RX title in 2015. He briefly raced in the senior Swift category following his title success, before competing in

the BMW Mini category where he finished third overall in his only full season, in 2018.

Having made just two rallycross starts since the end of the 2018 campaign, Durdin is aiming for the title in his return to the Swift class this year.

Durdin told MN: "In my opinion Swift Sport is going to be the class to watch this year. It's looking like it'll be the ultimate young gun shootout with a few of the more

experienced drivers in the mix."

Durdin has been attracted back to the Swift category because he believes driver talent can shine, and could help him on his future career path. "The class is super-competitive up, and allows for talent to shine rather than chasing constant development of the car. There's been a lot of good drivers come from this class and I hope I can be one of those too. It's well regulated and there's always a great atmosphere."



Durdin believes that Swifts are a level playing field



WRAPS COME OFF EDWARDS' NEW RIDE FOR 2021 CAMPAIGN

The livery for Matt Edwards' Volkswagen Polo GTI R5 that he will use to try and claim a record-breaking third consecutive British Rally Championship title this season was unveiled last week. He and co-driver Darren Garrod are set to test it at Sweet Lamb before the season-opener at Oulton Park on May 31. Edwards said: "I just can't wait to get out in the Polo for real. It's been a while since driving a rally car in anger but I'm very focused and ready to take on the new season!"

REPORT: CAR TRIAL

Ivinghoe Car Trial
By Duncan Stephens

The BTRDA and Motorsport UK Car Trials championship began on April 18 with a very dry Ivinghoe organised by Falcon Motor Club and a capacity entry of 50 machines.

The rear-wheel-drive class was fantastic with three contenders clean until three hills from end. Lige-mounted Dick Glossop

HOPPE AND GLOSSOP SHARE THE HONOURS IN TRAILS OPENER

and Dutton Melos man Mark Hoppe completed the day clean and tied for joint overall win.

In the new-car class, Rupert North swapped his trusty Rover Mini for a Suzuki Alto and promptly beat the double champion of 2020 Trevor Moffatt. Moffatt missed a 12-gate on the fourth hill and couldn't battle back. North won by 13 points and took third overall.

In the front-wheel-drive class, Simon Harris took the early lead but dropped a careless five marks to enable Gary Preston to have a three-point advantage at lunch. Preston's car cut out, costing a huge 11, but during the final round Harris experienced serious car issues dropping lots of points. That enabled Preston to take the win and fourth overall.

Robert Milligan was chasing Allrounders points and netted

third in class and seventh overall.

Moffatt could only manage sixth overall, ahead of fellow new-car-class drivers Nick Pollitt and Tim Beard. Richard Harrison completed the top ten overall in his VW Golf GTI Mk1. Richard Tompkins won the clubman section of the event in his reliable Imp.

Results
Ivinghoe Car Trial
Organiser: Falcon Motor Club When: April 18



Hoppe was joint winner

Where: Ivinghoe Aston **Starters:** 50
1 Mark Hoppe (Dutton Melos) 55%; 2 Dick Glossop (Lige) 55%; 3 Rupert North (Suzuki Alto); 4 Gary Preston (Fiat 126); 5 Simon Harris (VW Golf GTI); 6 Trevor Moffatt (Suzuki Corsa); 7 Robert Milligan (Rover Mini); 8 Nick Pollitt (Nissan Micra); 9 Tim Beard (Ford Ka); 10 Richard Harrison (VW Golf GTI).



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HISTORICS

DOWN THE PUB

CONOR MURPHY

Classic F3 newcomer
Age: 26 Lives: Wisborough
Green, Sussex



Murphy: Single-seater ace

He started in karts

"I raced karts on and off from around aged eight to 16. I was more concerned about going to school. Then I moved into Formula Ford with a Van Diemen RF83, which I borrowed off my uncle in Ireland. I raced that for five years, and then bought a Mondiale M895, which we then did two or three years with and I sold that in early 2020."

He's now at the wheel of a March 803B

"The plan was to do some testing with the F3 March last year and we just spent a bit of time fiddling with it. It is owned by Victor Nutter who is friend of my dad. He was very happy with us using it and maintaining it. So I did a couple of tests last year and we thought we'd try one race at the end of the season."

He won at Silverstone

"That was at Silverstone in October and it went very well. Off the back of that we thought we'd give the full Classic F3 season a go this year. That's the plan. It is very much a family operation."

He likes the car

"I'm really enjoying the car. It's very, very different to the Formula Ford though I think the basic feel of the car is the same. You can pay the price quite significantly if you're not as careful as you should have been, so I prefer it in that sense. It's 40 years old but still a very decent bit of kit and still fast enough."

He hopes to stay in historics

"I like the historic cars and it's a nice environment. Typically, we would spend our time in Europe during the summer and do most of the races there on some classic circuits. Vic has got a few cars so there are other possibilities. He always says it's there if you want to use it, but you have to get it going yourself. And so it's just time because my dad has his own business Quantum Racing, making dampers for all sorts of cars, historic and modern."

Racing has to fit around work

"I work for an energy firm doing liquified natural gas trading. Racing is sadly not a priority and has to fit around what I do, so I've booked all the time off for the rest of the year to be able to do the Friday test and the race weekend."

Wales is on the radar for R.A.C. runners



Photos: Paul Lawrence

CLASSIC WELSH TESTS ADDED TO ROGER ALBERT CLARK RALLY

Two days of iconic challenges add to the UK's toughest endurance event

By Paul Lawrence

The classic Mid-Wales forest special stages of Dyfnant, Gartheiniog and Dyfi will be used on the Roger Albert Clark Rally in the event's most ambitious Welsh leg to date.

Ahead of entries opening for the November 25-29 event, details of the Welsh stages have been revealed to Motorsport News.

Dyfnant, Gartheiniog and Dyfi will each be run twice on Sunday November 28 before the rally moves to the Epynt region for the final day on Monday. The stages used on Monday will be Epynt, Halfway, Crychan and Gwibedog, with the Crychan test running to almost 11 miles.

After the four stages are repeated, the rally will finish mid-afternoon in Carmarthen.

The Welsh leg follows three days of rallying in the north of England and southern Scotland and prospective competitors expect demand for entries will be very high when the entry list opens at 0900hrs on Friday morning.

The entry list has been capped at 135 cars and 20 of those places are earmarked for overseas crews. If all places are taken, a reserve list will be opened for a maximum

of 15 more entries. Rally manager Colin Heppenstall said: "The level of interest in the event is unparalleled and we are expecting a big rush when the list is opened. We expect the 115 places available for UK crews will fill very quickly. It is imperative that intending competitors download the event regulations and follow the entry and payment instructions to make sure of a place."

Pall Mall trophy event has bumper line-up

A capacity grid of 50 cars will contest the new three-hour Pall Mall Cup race at the Donington Historic Festival this weekend.

The race, for Pre-'66 GT, Sports and Touring Cars, builds on the success of a similar race at Silverstone last October.

Series promoter Duncan Wiltshire said: "The entry features an astonishing array of race cars, from Jaguar C-type, to MGB, Ford Mustang, Porsche 911, Lotus 26R, Aston Martin DP214 and no fewer than seven AC Cobras in various guises!"

The event, which is closed to spectators, will be the 10th Donington Historic Festival and other feature races include the inaugural Amon Cup for Ford GT40s along with the 'Mad Jack' Pre-War Sports race.

Eagling flies high at Jim Russell celebration

Forty-nine years after he raced in the inaugural Formula Ford Festival, Glenn Eagling was back in the category for the Jim Russell celebration event at Snetterton recently.

As a 17-year-old, Eagling raced a similar Lotus 61 in the first Formula Ford Festival held at his local track back in 1972.

"There was a 25-lap final, and I made it onto the back of the grid," said Eagling, 66. "It was the longest race I'd ever done and we all had to



Eagling was reunited with a Lotus 61 FF chassis

refuel on the grid after the warming up lap. I think I finished 12th in the final after a lot of people fell off."

Eagling enjoyed success in Clubmans and now supports

his son Dan's Lifetime Racing team. Glenn runs his Lotus 61 in occasional Historic Fford races and hopes to do a race or two this year in his F2 GRD 273.

Hats off to Simon Jackson on Alpine run

Former Caterham Vauxhall racer and Classic F3 champion Simon Jackson had a change of scene at Snetterton recently after acquiring a Sunbeam Alpine to race in Historic Road Sports.

The father of prolific historic winner Cam said that he fancied having a car that he could tinker with himself and was less work to run and operate than the single-seaters.

Previously, Jackson has raced in Caterham Vauxhalls and a Thunder Saloons Vauxhall Astra back in the 1980s but in the last 20 years has concentrated on single-seaters.

"It is a bit of a departure," he said about racing the Alpine open-topped after the roof came off in qualifying.



Topless: Simon Jackson's Alpine



IMPROVED ACCESS AT GOODWOOD

A new pedestrian bridge is being built at Goodwood and will be open for the Revival Race Meeting in September. The bridge, sited on the approach to Madgwick Corner will allow access to a new spectator area on the inside of the first corner at the historic Sussex race track. The Revival will run in September followed by the next Members' Meeting in October.

IN BRIEF

HRDC gets going

The Historic Racing Drivers' Club will start its 2021 calendar later than expected at the Thruxton Historic June 12-13) with races for the Jack Sears Trophy for Pre-'66 Touring Cars, Allstars and Classic Alfas. Planned races at Castle Combe and the Donington Historic Festival were shelved due to pandemic restrictions, though the Castle Combe races have now been rearranged for Bank Holiday Monday, August 30.

Extra Formula 2

Two races for Historic Formula 2 have been added to the HSCC's International Trophy meeting on the Silverstone GP circuit (May 22-23). Following the postponement of the Jim Clark Memorial meeting at Hockenheim (May 8-9), which was to have been the second date on the Historic F2 calendar, the HSCC has added two races for the series into its high-profile Silverstone GP event.

Bartell rejoins

Max Bartell rejoined the Historic Formula Ford grid at Snetterton in the rare March 709 owned by Ross Drybrough and raced last year by Cam Jackson. Bartell's racing programme with his Merlyn Mk20 is going to be curtailed by the arrival of a first baby in July and so Drybrough offered him a couple of races in the March.

No more Eifel

The Eifel Rallye Festival has been cancelled for a second year due to the on-going Covid pandemic. The traditional late July event, based on the German city of Daun, features star cars and drivers tackling demonstration stages. The 2020 edition was due to have been a 10th anniversary event but was cancelled and the organisers have now dropped plans to run on July 22-24 this year. Instead, the 10th edition will now be held in July 2022.

Barter back in TVR

Julian Barter returned to racing his well-known TVR 3000M at Snetterton after the car was rebuilt and repaired for him as a surprise by his family. After five years away from the TVR, which was a former 70s Road Sports title winner, Barter was told on Christmas Day that his dad Charles and his partner Elizabeth, had arranged for the car to be re-prepped.

Comeback for Dix

Veteran racer Stuart Dix rejoined the Historic FF pack Snetterton recently for his first race in nearly two years. An accident at Spa in July 2019 badly damaged his Reynard and last year Stuart started cancer treatment. However, now 72, he is back racing his Cooper Chinook.

GETTING STARTED IN MOTORSPORT

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS

**Get involved.
Have fun.
Avoid the
pitfalls.**



We give step-by-step path
for making dreams reality

By Graham Keillon

'The child is father to the man', as the saying goes (and apologies for the poor gender politics). As motorsport enthusiasts, no doubt as children we loved the idea of one day competing ourselves. And the desire probably has lingered on into adulthood somewhere in the back of our minds.

Little wonder. Competing in motorsport looks great fun, and it is. Yet only a tiny proportion of us do it and again it's little wonder. It's in motorsport's nature that you need much to be in place before you begin, and the whole process of how you do it isn't all that obvious to an outsider.

In this special 12-page pull-out we've sought to remove the mystery by taking you through the steps of getting involved. We also help you get the most out of your participation as well as to avoid the common pitfalls and the about-as-common ways of wasting your money.

WHERE YOU BEGIN

**YOUR FIRST
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ENGINEERING SUCCESS

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THE FUTURE P21**



GET IN THE RIGHT GEAR

**THINGS TO
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P24**



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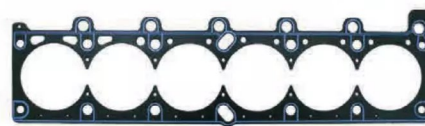
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Photos: Mike Hoyer/Jakob Ebrey, ARDS, IMechE Formula Student, Mick Walker



We seek to remove the mystery and the pitfalls from your path to competing for real

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO GETTING INVOLVED

You're a motorsport fan. Or at least hopefully you are as why else would you be here?

And as a motorsport fan it's probable that the thought has crossed your mind to have a go yourself. But what do you do next to put that into action?

Motorsport differs herein from many other activities. After all, going racing is not nearly so simple as buying a football and heading to your local five-a-side pitch or purchasing a set of clubs and finding a golf course.

And that's where this special 12-page supplement comes in. We have put together a step-by-step guide for getting involved yourself, with the aim of demystifying the process and encouraging you to make your dream reality.

Moreover, as we note at many points, motorsport remains expensive even at this level and investing your money in the wrong place is deceptively simple to do at each point. We with this have sought to highlight your key considerations as well as a few of the common pitfalls so that you can avoid them.

We start with a look at getting your licence and developing your skills behind the wheel including how coaches and trackdays can help you.

One area that motorsport has changed, almost literally from nothing, in the past quarter century is in its range of university and college courses and high-profile competitions for budding motorsport engineers and mechanics. Stephen Lickorish navigates this newly charted landscape.

Motorsport News editor Matt James explores the stepping-off points into motorsport competition for real, looking at which series in racing and rallying are the best starters for novices.

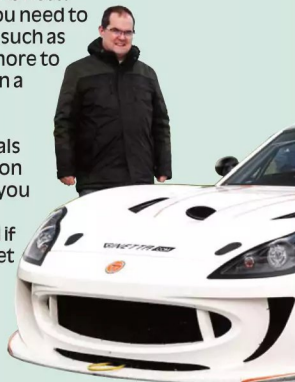
Then Robert Ladbroke talks us through what you need to think about when buying your kit and equipment such as your overalls and helmet. As he outlines, there's more to consider than simply being the metaphorical kid in a sweet shop...

And finally, if you fancy getting involved in the running of events, the British Motorsports Marshals Club chair Nadine Lewis explains the many things on offer from being a marshal or an official, and how you can get involved.

We hope our information provided is helpful, and if you have queries or comments do not hesitate to get in touch with us at graham.keilloh@kelsey.co.uk.

Graham Keilloh

Deputy Editor, Motorsport News
graham.keilloh@kelsey.co.uk



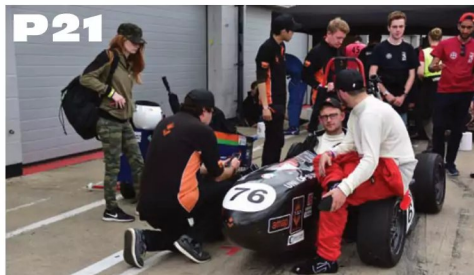
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We navigate the new world of engineering qualifications and competitions



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A look at the ideal race and rally contests to have your first taste of competition

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How to be central to the action

The benefits of being a marshal or an official



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British Association of Rally Schools

The British Association of Rally Schools has members throughout the United Kingdom. It provides National coverage for new entrants to Stage Rallying required to complete a BARS Licence Assessment prior to being issued with Motorsport UK RS Inter Club – Stage Rally Licence. It also provides an approved network of rally course providers to the general public, corporate groups and competitors.



Map Legend

- Red dot: The Devonian Rally School
- Orange dot: The Devon Rally School
- Green dot: Cars 16 Street
- Light green dot: Cars 16 Rally School
- Blue dot: Devonian Rally School
- Dark blue dot: Devonian Motorsports Centre
- Purple dot: Devonian Rally Circuit
- Yellow dot: London Rally School
- Light blue dot: Motorsport Vision Brands Hatch
- Dark blue dot: Motorsport Vision Oulton Park



Contact Details

W: rallyschools-bars.co.uk

E: secretary@rallyschools-bars.co.uk

GETTING STARTED IN MOTORSPORT



Getting a coach and doing trackdays are way to go

THE FIRST STEPS

You want to go motor racing, but what do you do to make it reality? Graham Keilloh

Iwant to be a racing driver". It's a common childhood aspiration. And for many motorsport enthusiasts the aspiration never quite goes away.

For most of us though, by the point of adulthood, various things get in the way of making it reality. Not least that simple, but complicated, question of where to begin? It's not obvious to the uninitiated, plus motorsport often gives a good outward impression of being a rather rarefied place...

A good man to start with in answering the question is Calum Lockie, a multiple champion in British GT and elsewhere. He's been competing since the 1980s and coaching for almost as long, working with complete novices right through to those at the top. His recommendation is clear: get a coach.

"Because you're condensing your

learning process," he tells Motorsport News. "Time on track is expensive, so if we can reduce that by using a driver coach then not only do they tend to pay for themselves but your learning process is definitely sped up. Also you [are] learning a few things which might avoid some damage or something like that. So using the experience of someone who's already done the hard knocks is well worth it!"

"Anyone thinking about going racing, they should start doing trackdays," Lockie continues. "It may seem expensive but it's a lot less than racing, for the time you get on track. You can come to a trackday and you've got seven hours' track time, you might be out there for three-and-a-half hours. At club level that's probably four, five race weekends."

Pat Blakeney, chairman of the Association of Racing Drivers Schools (or ARDS, as it's more commonly known), concurs. "You go on a test day,

you're chasing lap times, whereas at something like a trackday you can develop your driving skills," he tells MN. "If you're on the outer limits of your capabilities and the car's you're more in survival mode rather than learning mode!"

And even if you haven't got a coach for your trackday, help will still likely be at hand. "Most people are really prepared to help on trackdays," Lockie says. "[It's] a very friendly atmosphere and people are enthusiasts. And enthusiasts are always willing to help."

Plus if you haven't forked out for your own racing car, don't worry. "A lot of people who haven't got race cars are the ones learning hopefully to go racing at some point and they're learning their trade and gaining confidence by using their road cars," Lockie continues.

"I'm a great proponent of sitting in-car with people [as a coach], because then

you can see real time what they're actually doing. [You can] say 'did you feel how that felt?' You can't do that off film."

"Sitting in is really good with [road cars] because they're a bit quieter [to allow communication]."

Technology to aid coaching is also an area that's come on massively. "If we wish to improve we need to be able to look at what we're doing and say is that better or is that not, because otherwise how do you really know you're better?" Lockie outlines. "You could say lap times, [but] that could be a combination of things."

"I'm a massive proponent of the video VBOX system. It's inexpensive in relative terms, certainly to motorsport. But it's fantastic, if you get the HD2 version and it's broadcast-quality film so you can see great detail."

"I generally have one pointing out the front and one looking at the driver, so you can see how the driver is reacting in different circumstances. And then it records, apart from the film, all the data: speed against position is the one I use most because then you can overlay laps and look at where time's been gained or lost. As a learning tool it's absolutely fantastic and would recommend it to anybody."

What about choosing your coach? "You need to be a little bit careful about who you choose to look after you, because it's a big investment," Lockie cautions, "someone if they're hiring an instructor, [or] a driver coach, should be sure that they're the best they can afford. Some people present themselves as driver coaches, [but] a reputable trackday

operator is never going to employ a rubbish instructor."

Some coaches specialise in a particular area, though many such as Lockie teach across the board and have coached in many disciplines. Blakeney explains:

"The instructors will always be able to offer advice on career paths, routes into the sport, it's important to have that conversation with the customer. The first thing you always try and ascertain is what they are planning on racing."

"But we try and teach them skills for life. Most modern cars that race are paddleshift, quite a lot of them [have] two pedals rather than three pedals, but we're still looking to try and teach people the art of changing gear, braking, heel-and-toe technique."

"We work on the basis that what we might teach you might not be 100% relevant to what you're going to race but we're to teach you some skills for life."

Given many who try their hand at racing have extensive road car experience, there are likely to be things to unlearn. "The basics [are] the same but how you use them and the timing of it and so on is quite different, and space you use on the road and so on," Lockie explains. "So you point out how by placing your vision in the correct place, which is a very different place from when on the road, and using the width of the road and steering with hands fixed in one place rather than feeding the wheel like we're taught to on the road. [But] people are bright, they pick it up very quickly."

Blakeney adds: "The biggest thing with any racing driver is to make sure that they



Pat Blakeney: offers advice

"We are teaching you some skills for life"

Pat Blakeney

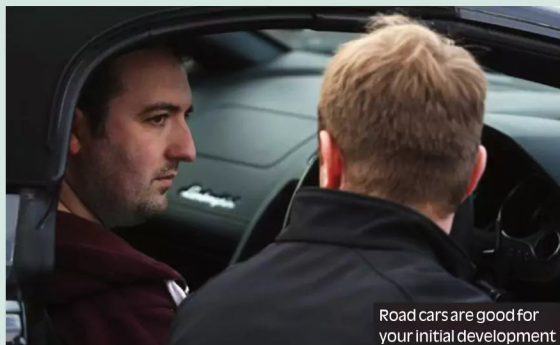


Lockie is proponent of sitting in

Photos: Fresh Orange, ARDS, Jakob Ebrey



Champion Lockie says coaching greatly condenses your learning



Road cars are good for your initial development



Instructors can give advice on career paths in racing

IN MOTOR RACING

looks at the initial steps of getting a licence and developing your skills

arrive at a corner before the car does. That's probably the one biggest thing is making sure that the pupil is looking far enough up the road and planning far enough up the road so they're proactive rather than reactive."

Before you can compete too you need a licence. In the case of circuit racing this is the ARDS licence. Time was all you had to do to race was pass a medical and apply for your licence, but these days there's a test to pass. Don't though be daunted.

"It's a half-day course," Blakeney explains. "It gives people a bit of information and checks basic competence. So we're not saying that everybody that passes the test is going to be the next Lewis Hamilton or George Russell or whatever, but they proved that they can change gear, they've got a reasonable understanding of the lines, techniques, braking etc."

"The half day, that will include a reasonable amount of classroom tuition, you'll then have a demonstration of correct lines, techniques etc with the instructor driving you around the circuit and you will then drive the instructor around for a set period. [It] will vary depending on the circuit length but it's normally a minimum of six laps. And the latter couple of laps they need to drive around without too much input from the instructor sitting in the passenger seat because come race day they'll be on their own."

The ARDS test will likely be in a saloon or modified saloon, and doing the test will likely cost you just north of £300. It's open to those aged 16 and over plus there's a



You'll need to pass your ARDS test before you can race for real

junior ARDS test for 14 and 15 year olds. All UK licenced circuits – including Knockhill, Kirkistown, Anglesey and Pembrey – have a resident school. Some schools also offer pre-ARDS training.

"They come from all walks of life and all ages," Blakeney says of ARDS test pupils, "we've had pupils in their 80s wanting to get their first race licence."

"People do fail [the ARDS test] but it's mainly because they haven't prepared properly. Don't just come fresh off the streets and expect to pass your course if you've never driven on a race track before, we always suggest that people have done trackdays or a driving experience day or the like. You wouldn't expect to go and pass your pilots' licence without having flown an aeroplane would you?"

"The real main criteria is would you feel comfortable sitting on the grid with this pupil, because ultimately that could be the case, and if the answer is yes that is a pass."

"We're not going to rubber stamp somebody through if they're not suitable. The normal recommendation would be to look just go away, do a couple of trackdays or something like that to get up to speed a little bit."

But, as we've said already, don't be daunted. "The schools work extremely hard to help the pupil rather than putting obstacles in the way," Blakeney assures us.

"We try very hard to help the person's journey into motorsport. All of the ARDS schools we have a common love for motorsport and we want to encourage people into the sport that we love."

Eyes wide shut

Cost is a perennial consideration in motorsport, and as we've learned this applies as much to those on the first development rungs as anyone else.

Yet there's a way to shave chunks off your lap times without parting with a penny. It's a technique called visualisation.

"I use it very intensely," Calum Lockie tells MN. "It's a technique widely used by all top sports people in the world and business people, and you can use it for just about anything in life actually."

"It's simply closing your eyes, which is the easiest way to do it, in a peaceful location, maybe a bedroom, in a comfy chair in your sitting room, and drive the circuit in your head."



Lockie uses brain power

"So the more info you put in the more angles your brain can approach your visualisation from and thereby our brain does two amazing things when we're driving."

"One is it goes to what we're looking at when we're driving, so if you look over to the right your brain says you want to go to the right and it will adjust the steering accordingly."

"Which is why placing your vision when you're driving around a track accurately is so important because if you're not looking in the right place, you're not giving your brain the right information about where you want to go."

"The other amazing thing, when you visualise your brain, your subconscious, is actually learning to do what you're visualising better."

"So if there's no way you can go testing before your race, if you spend maybe half an hour for five nights before you go to the track doing 10 laps a night you will have largely replaced your testing."

"The actual sitting in the car is the very best, that's 100%, but visualisation is an extremely powerful tool and you can learn an awful lot from it."



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GETTING STARTED IN MOTORSPORT

Photos: IMechE Formula Student, Jakob Ebreys



Formula Student teams design, build and run car



Online National Motorsport Academy course has a practical side

HOW CAN YOUNG ENGINEERS AND MECHANICS LEARN THEIR SKILLS?

*In the last quarter century qualifications and contests for those wanting a motorsport technical career have grown from zero to a vast range. **Stephen Lickorish** explains what's available*

Plenty of aspects of motorsport have changed over the past quarter century. But in few areas has the shift been as significant as the way the next generation of engineers and mechanics are being trained. In years gone by, they would have either studied a general engineering course or learned on the job.

But the creation of bespoke motorsport qualifications has significantly altered the education landscape from when UWTSD Swansea introduced the first motorsport engineering degree in 1998.

Since then, dozens of universities and colleges have started offering their own motorsport qualifications, giving students the chance to specifically tailor their learning to a future career in the sport. But with each course available being unique and focusing on subtly different areas, it can be difficult for prospective students to know which direction to head.

"If you take 15 motorsport courses, all will do something different because of staffing, resources and who they've got as local employers," says Josh Smith, a Bikesports and OSS title winner and motorsport engineering course leader at Bridgwater and Taunton College. "Wiltshire College have a Formula Ford team because that's what they've done, we've been quite sports prototype-based because it's what I've done."

As Smith notes, one of the key ways



Formula Student teamwork

courses differ is in the cars students get the chance to run. However, not all courses offer the opportunity to get practical experience in the racing world and this threatens to leave some students with a knowledge gap that makes them less attractive to employers.

Smith says the racing team is a central element to Bridgwater and Taunton's course, giving students practical understanding alongside the theory. "A lot of our students come to us to be involved and part of a race team as part of their training," he explains.

"The race team, for me, is what the course is arranged around. Rather than do data logging with a sample off the internet, we're looking at data from the race weekend so it all ties in. When they get into a job they've had two or four or five years in the race team. It means they don't go into the working environment so raw."

In the past this has involved working on Smith's successful Radical PR6 – known as Poppet – along with helping with his RJ Motorsport squad. But the college suffered a huge blow when its motorsport workshop and a number of cars, including Poppet, were destroyed in a suspected arson attack earlier this year, leaving Smith looking at different categories and cars to be involved with.

It is not just in circuit racing that students can gain vital real-world experience that makes them far more employable. Competitions such as Formula Student are also beneficial. Formula Student's Christopher Smout describes the contest as being "an engineering and design competition that challenges university students to design, build and run their own single-seater race car". The student teams are judged



Students run GT Cup Mosler

in a range of static tests – such as the design and the business case for manufacturing their car – as well as on-track assessments at Silverstone, including sprint, acceleration and endurance tests.

"The project is designed to be as close to a real-world scenario as it can be so students can develop their technical skills but also project management and team working," continues Smout.

"The difficulty a lot of unis have is being able to offer them practical project-based work. Some students only get to experience that in their final year but Formula Student is open throughout their time at uni so gives them essential experience that employers find valuable and gives them a leg up in their practical skills."

Formula Student benefits from having F1 motorsport managing director Ross Brawn as its patron plus the likes of David Brabham, James Allison and Paddy Lowe as ambassadors. While the UK competition has been running for 23 years, an Artificial Intelligence contest has also been created to feature the latest technology of autonomous vehicles and this is beginning to attract increasing interest.

For budding engineers at an earlier stage in their development, the F1 in Schools initiative gives schoolchildren practical experience on a less complicated scale. The Greenpower Education Trust's programme is another that students can get involved with.

Alongside the more traditional in-person college and university courses, the National Motorsport Academy also created the first fully online motorsport qualifications, with both undergraduate and Masters options



College's Radical PR6 'Poppet'

offered in conjunction with De Montfort University. Founder Kevin Riley was already involved with the successful National Design Academy and, after returning to motorsport competition himself, helped create the new courses.

"With 30,000 students in different countries around the world, teaching practical stuff, we thought, 'what if we teach motorsport engineering online?'" Riley says. "We got the top people onboard and we've now got about 300 students in 30 countries."

Despite being a virtual course – with students still able to establish a strong online community – practical experience has also been offered by running Riley's Mosler in the GT Cup and students are set to help run a Lotus Evora this year. "Most of the course is Physics and Maths but, if they've not done much racing, they can come with us and learn the spanners," says Riley. "We've got people in nine of the 10 Formula 1 teams and people in the World Endurance Championship and IndyCar."

The Academy is selective about who it admits to ensure high standards. In addition, it is now branching out into the world of business within motorsport with a new range of courses.

And that typifies how students have never before enjoyed such choice when it comes to studying for a future career in motorsport. With the flexibility of online courses, the academic prestige of university degrees and the practical experience with race teams offered by many colleges, there are plenty of ways in which the next generation of engineers and team personnel can learn their trade. ■

Even drivers have a qualification...

It is not just the mechanics of the future that can gain a motorsport-specific qualification, aspiring drivers can too. The Motorsport UK Academy offers its Enhanced Diploma in Sporting Excellence.

The two-year course is run in conjunction with Loughborough College and is open to 16-18-year-olds who already have a competition licence. As well as giving drivers understanding in areas that will help their competition, such as nutrition and fitness, the DISE programme is also designed to give vital skills should they not forge a career out of driving. "It's a fully-funded course and gives talented young competitors who are serious about pursuing a career in motorsport that opportunity to gain an academic qualification while competing," explains Motorsport UK competitions pathway manager Katie Baldwin. "We're trying to give them a well-rounded experience of what it takes to be involved in motorsport as a professional."

"It's a real eye-opener for them to understand it's not just about being good behind the wheel," Baldwin continues. "We bring in experts and professionals, like from ZONE and Porsche, and it provides them with the opportunity to build an extensive network of contacts. Sandy Mitchell, Harry King and Luke Browning have been on the course recently, so we've got quite a few success stories."

Applicants need five GCSEs and more details can be found at motorsportuk.org/the-sport/motorsport-uk-academy/enhanced-dise.



British GT champion Mitchell

"Each course will do something different"

Josh Smith

GETTING STARTED IN MOTORSPORT



Production Saloons from the 1980s are an easy start

OPTIONS TO SUIT EACH POCKET IN UK MOTORSPORT

Matt James lifts the lid on some starting-out points for novice racers in the United Kingdom

Deciding to take to the race tracks, rally stages or short ovals is a big step in itself, but once the licence has been successfully earned, a whole range of opportunities open up.

It is more than likely that anyone who has the motivation to go through the licence process already has a pretty good idea of which discipline they would want to take part in. But for those who haven't, there are a vast array of categories out there to tempt the potential participant.

We take a look at some of the most

successful over the years, but these are only just a selection of what is out there. It is always worth studying.

Racing

For those aiming for a single-seater thrill, the cheapest way to get on circuit is the 750 Motor Club's Formula Vee category. The multi-chassis class uses the 1300cc VW engine in a car that weighs 300kg, and offers 100bhp. It has been the launchpad for a number of careers, including that of current British Touring Car Championship title-holder Ash Sutton.

The 750MC also offers the Locost

category for identical sports racers. These use a 1300cc Ford engine from a Fiesta and the appeal is that drivers with limited technical knowledge can bolt one of these machines together themselves.

Those are both great stepping off points, while MotorSport Vision Racing runs the Trackday Trophy. As its name suggests, it is designed to take those who have enjoyed their initial track time in a road car but want to make the step up to real competition.

The saloon-based series is levelled up on a power-to-weight ratio to ensure that big bucks don't rule the roost. It is also designed to boost the chances of a novice, so experienced ringers are not allowed onto the grid.

The Caterham ladder is another perfect starting point. Its Academy series has a strong tradition of introducing hundreds of drivers to the sport.

The category starts off with a selection of tests, including races, sprints and hillclimbs before the competitors can then carry on their motorsport journey by taking that very same 125bhp car onto the tracks for a full season in one of the Graduates championships.

The long-serving Mazda MX-5 has

proved to be the biggest hit on the national racing scene for the last decade, so much so that three clubs now provide championships catering for the Japanese two-seaters. The British Racing and Sports Car Club runs four competitions, ranging from the novice-friendly Clubman division right up to the Supercup. The 750MC also runs a version of the one-make series while the British Automobile Racing Club has its Max5 version. While the driver-friendly and forgiving MX-5s are great value in terms of smiles-per-hour, it is worth doing the research first to determine the level of competition that any rookie would be comfortable with.

There are numerous places to race Citroen C1s, including the BARC-based endurance championship and there are pocket rockets abounding in the BRSCC's new CityCar Cup too, which includes Peugeot 107s and Toyota Aygos too. The City Car Cup particularly has an emphasis on novice drivers as it aims to get newcomers used to on-track sport without the fear of a professional racer coming along and blowing their doors off.

In historic racing, there are plentiful

offerings for those who are taking their initial steps in motorsport. The new-for-2021 1980s Production series is guaranteed to encourage new racers, who will be able to take part in what used to be called 'showroom' spec cars with limited modifications for racing, and running on road tyres too. The Road Sports classes offer a similarly affordable entry point.

The Historic Racing Drivers Club Allstars and Jack Sears Trophy are others worth investigating too. There are offerings from the Classic Sports Car Club, including its Tin Tops series, which fit the bill nicely as well.

Rallying

For the younger competitors, the Junior 1000 class – a category that has helped launch many careers including European Rally Championship winner Chris Ingram – is the perfect place to get involved.

There are stringent measures in place to make sure each competitor is fully briefed and trained in what to expect from a rally event before the 14 to 17 year olds are allowed to tackle a competitive event.

The hopefuls will be asked to compete in three production car trials and will be



BRSCC's new CityCar Cup class features some miniature models



The swarming field of 1300cc Locost battlers

observed by officials and gain licence signatures before they are allowed to go and take the BARS rally licence test, and then attendance at a Formula 1000 test day is a prerequisite. Once that has been monitored and approved, drivers may then enter one of the season's events.

The events are split into grade 1 and grade 2, and total novices may only enter the first of these until they have proved their competency before they may then progress to the next level.

Not every driver is a teenager, of course, and there are many championships throughout the UK – or, at least, there will be when entrants are allowed back on the stages.

Prime among these will be the new Crew25 category, which has deliberately been designed to encourage a new generation of drivers. Both driver and co-driver must be under that age, and the events are a real challenge with rounds like the Harry Flatters Stages among the proposed rallies. The series is split into four classes, with an up-to-1000cc division being the starting point.

Beyond the age-restricted sections of rallying, there are a host of series which will cater for most machines. One of rallying's strongest calling cards is the multi-class structure, which will appeal to both the entrant who has upgraded a basic production car to those who enjoy a deeper pocket and can purchase something a little more tasty.

The Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship is a great starting point for those who feel they are not ready for the challenge of the forests on their initial forays into rallying.

But for those who are desperate to get between the trees, the BTRDA Rally Series is one of the most accessible and popular disciplines in the UK. There are regional contests in Scotland and Wales too for those whose commitments mean that travelled further afield is not on the radar.

For those who enjoy classic machines, the Historic Endurance Rally Organisation is the perfect place to begin, with testing long-distance events in modified road cars. It runs everything from trials to full distance events, and there are options to get behind the wheel on an arrive and drive basis. The events are graded according to the level of experience of the competitors, and the social scene is positively designed to welcome newcomers.

The Historic Rally Car Register also runs a series of events for road cars and also offers stage and road rallies in a selection of mouth-watering machines. Again, cars are available to hire for the these events and as a toe-in-the-water for competition motorsport the categories the HRCR offers are unbeatable. ■



Formula Vee is the most cost-effective way of racing a single-seater



The perennial Mazda MX-5 has become a huge hit in national racing



MSVR's Trackday Trophy classes cars on a power-to-weight ratio

Going a different route for drivers who want the thrills in rallycross and on ovals

The list of highly successful drivers in motorsport who have begun their careers in either short oval racing or rallycross is surprisingly impressive. The stepping-off points into either of these disciplines is almost designed to encourage newcomers.

The minimum licence requirement for competing in rallycross at an entry level is a Motorsport UK RS Inter Club, so while drivers with a race or rally test can also compete, it's not a necessity to get started.

The BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Series is aimed at entry-level competitors, and the regulations within its Production and Modified categories facilitate a range of engine capacities and modification levels.

This is designed to allow drivers into the discipline who may have existing cars, requiring only minor modification.

Some teams rent Production-specification cars for those wanting to arrive and drive, while the paddock is renowned for its friendly nature, and for those with the ability to put their own car together from scratch, plenty of helpful advice can be sought at events, or on social media.

Within the higher profile 5 Nations BRX, there are four single-make categories which are ideal for newcomers.

Arguably the most established, the Swift Sport series caters for lightly modified 1600cc Suzuki Swift machines. Swifts can be built, bought or hired on an event or season basis.

Swift series organiser Peter Gwynne Motorsport also provides driver tuition, and hospitality at events as part of the package.

The Junior Rallycross Championship, for drivers ages between 14 and 17 years old is for similar machines, powered by 1300cc engines. The BMW Mini category is also for 1600cc machines, albeit fitted with the Cooper S supercharged engines and like the Swift class, cars can be built, bought or rented.

The fastest of the British RX single-make classes is the RX150 category. The single-seater buggy, rear-wheel drive machines are powered by a 1000cc motorbike engines, with six-speed sequential gearboxes, and set lap times only just shy of the headline four-wheel-drive 600bhp Supercar machines. They can also be bought or hired.

There are plenty of ways into rallycross, and short oval racing too has its own stepping-off points for those who are interested in tackling the close-quarter action.

Rookie rods is the ideal non-contact starting point for oval racing. The cars are fairly basic in their regulations, non-contact hot hatch-type cars.

As it is non-contact, it teaches racecraft and is run in grades so is one properly with novices at the front and the stars at the back.

It has a massive customer base at Spedworth and there is an equivalent in the Midlands called Incarods, so there is a lot of racing drivers can tackle with the car.



Junior Rallycross uses the Suzuki Swift as a base machine

Why putting the kart before the career can be a positive step for the future

Perhaps the way that most people get involved with motorsport is through karting. It is a staple for a stag night or a hen do, and it can give competitors a taste of what motorsport is all about before a massive financial outlay. It also has the bonus of hooking younger competitors from a very early age.

There are more than 150 arrive-and-drive karting centres across the UK, and this will be the first step that most take. Once the adrenaline has started to flow, there are some easy steps to turn that into competition.

Most local kart tracks will run their own championships, and they are always on hand to advise which is the right level of competition and the right type of kart for any novice to use. These will generally be operated without the need for red tape: it really is get-in-and-go racing.

For those who are more serious about their competition, Motorsport UK's Go Karting Starter pack, which costs £59, is the go-to place to find out all the information needed about the various classes and it covers the cost of a first licence. It has all the



Karting can help experience

information needed for competitors to undertake the Association of Racing Kart Schools (ARKS) novice driver course. All potential competitors will need to undertake the £98 course.

Within this framework, there will be pointers about which classes are the right ones for a child, which age groups are racing and which are the most appropriate chassis.

Beyond that, the best course of action, even for the amateur racer, would be to join the local kart club. It is always a benefit to be surrounded by like-minded people who can help with a gentle push in the right direction. The club locations can be found at abkc.org.uk or at motorsportuk.org.

Photos: Steve Jones, Mick Walker, Hal Ridge, Paul Lawrence, Jakob Ebrey

GETTING STARTED IN MOTORSPORT

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

GETTING KITTED OUT RIGHT

Buying the wrong gear can be costly and frustrating. Robert Ladbrook explains how you can avoid the pitfalls

Remember when your parents used to take you to a toy shop as a kid? Being let loose in a racewear supplier for the first time is a similar thing.

Having your race licence gives you the freedom to kit yourself out to

whatever style, substance and budget suits. But, before you buy, remember the ground rules: there are varying levels of mandatory equipment for different motorsport branches, plus many levels of certification and quality. Be sure to know what you need before you start.

Here experts share top tips for making sure your hard-earned cash doesn't go to waste.



HANS/FHR



Getting the right angle is key

The world of Frontal Head Restraints (or Head And Neck Support) can be a nightmare, and they've been mandatory since 2016. But don't let yourself get bewildered.

There's a flood of types from standard 'sit on your shoulders' to 'strap around your torso' to 'strap around your neck'. They also come in different sizes and different degrees of reclining angle, and getting the right angle is crucial for comfort. The main ones are:

10deg: For a bolt-upright seat, often used in production saloons or short oval sprint cars.

20deg: Found in most modified racing saloons and sports cars.

30deg: For single-seaters or

prototypes, where you'll be in a 'sat in a bathtub' driving position.

Osborne adds: "Ignore the weight stats of them as it basically equates to a pre-race toilet break!"

"It's a good idea to check what angles other drivers are using to make sure you're likely to need the same. I've also seen some people struggle to get in and out of cars because the rear plate is too high, so shop around and try a few on to find the most comfortable.

"It'll feel alien at first, but once your harness is done up nice and tight you'll hardly feel it. The vast majority of new helmets come with HANS clips installed now, but always give a double check that the two are compatible before buying."

Overalls

Your overalls provide an invaluable level of protection against fire. Most now have either two or three layers of flame-retardant Nomex; each layer is expected to give you around 15 seconds of protection.

Also check the regulations of your chosen series in case there's a requirement for a higher-standard suit – many higher-ranking series demand three layers minimum.

Jamie Stanley is a seasoned GT racer who has coached drivers of all levels. He says: "I always tell new drivers to forget fashion and buy whatever is the best fit. Too many get caught up in brand names and image and end up with a suit that's ill-fitting."

"The rise in made-to-measure services has pushed the cost down, so many opt for those now against off-the-shelf suits, but it all depends on budget and usage. You should always buy the best you can afford."

"I always tell drivers to forget fashion and buy the best"

Jamie Stanley



Gloves: a matter of comfort

Underwear

There are some grey areas around this, but there shouldn't be, as Stanley explains: "When a driver turns up to a test day not wearing proper Nomex underwear claiming 'it's just a test' I always say a race car doesn't know, it'll burn just the same!"

Point taken. While items such as balaclavas are mandatory in many areas of motorsport, flame-retardant undershirts, socks or long johns aren't (although many higher-profile series do now mandate their use). But they're well worth the investment.

Gloves

You must have them, and they will be one of the items checked thoroughly during scrutineering. But there's no real golden rule to choosing the right pair, just go with what's comfortable and now that most use a gel-style grip it's possible to get purchase on any kind

of racing wheel with the same pair. One area to check for is padding. "If I'm racing something manual like a Formula Ford I always wear a heavier-padded pair of gloves against if I'm in a GT car," says Stanley, "purely because it keeps the blisters away!"

Helmet

It's the most obvious purchase, but it can be the easiest to get wrong.

McLaren factory GT driver Joe Osborne can't stress the importance enough. "I learned that the hard way during a huge Formula BMW shunt that ended up with me basically headbutting a barrier," he says. "If it hadn't been for my Aral helmet, which stood up to the hit brilliantly, I perhaps wouldn't be racing now."

"Safety standards can change quite regularly, but that's a good thing as helmets are getting stronger, lighter and safer with each evolution."

"It's so important to try a range on – no two manufacturers fit exactly the same and different types suit different heads. But you should buy as good as you can afford as it's the best investment

you can make for your safety."

"Consider where you'll be racing in five years. If you're only doing club racing, a standard laminate construction one will do, but if you're planning to race in higher-level series make sure to check the regulations as many now demand carbon helmets and it's far cheaper to buy one expensive helmet over two or three cheaper ones."

"Also wear a balaclava when trying the helmet to make sure the sizing is right with all the layers on. If it feels tight and uncomfortable after three minutes, imagine it during a three-hour stint. I even sometimes consider how long my hair will get. It matters that much."

Also check over your helmet after any accident. If it shows any major marks of damage, replace it immediately.



Helmet purchase can be deceptively easy to get wrong

Boots

Again go with what feels good and, just like helmets, it's important to try different brands on as each fits slightly differently.

"I have two pairs – Alpinestars and Adidas," says Stanley. "I wear the Adidas mostly as they have a wider fit, but in a Formula Ford I shoehorn myself into the narrower Alpinestars to make that bit of extra room in the footwell – same as George Russell did in Sakhir last year."

There's also the question of material – leather or suede? Both offer the same level of protection thanks to the Nomex lining, but a wet paddock and a trek through a gravel trap tends to make a mess of fabric...



Try before you buy...

Other equipment

With your basic kit in the bag, there are a few other elements worth thinking about, especially around items such as the FHR/HANS.

You should ensure your race harness is HANS-compatible,

meaning its shoulder straps will fit neatly over the slots in your FHR to provide maximum comfort and support, and you can get seats correctly moulded to compensate for the systems. Your helmet will

be legal for 10 years from its first use, as will your FHR/HANS, but you'll have to shell out some pocket change for a scrutineering sticker for each at the first event. Plus, if you're planning to go rallying,

you'll want to think about an intercom system, or getting a lid with one already built in.

And then there's fire extinguishers. These are mandatory at all levels and must be serviced every two

years to make sure they're always in top working order. In rallying, you'll need two per car. As always, read the regulations of your series perfectly to make sure you don't get caught out.

GETTING STARTED IN MOTORSPORT

NADINE LEWIS



The British Motorsports Marshals Club chair explains how you can get involved in marshalling and officiating



Volunteers are key to any motorsport event



Marshals find having a sense of humour helps!

It's often said and it remains true: without volunteers motorsport couldn't happen. And not everyone realises that in marshalling and officiating you can pretty much do anything and you will still be a volunteer.

And as volunteers we are a key part to any event that takes place. Primarily we're there for everyone's safety, and you are at the heart of motorsport by sorting out issues and dealing with incidents.

Equally as a marshal you can watch some cracking racing very close up and personal, in the prime seat in the house, and all for free! And it doesn't have to be at Formula 1, at a club event you see some great racing with drivers who are doing it for their hobby.

Anyone can be a marshal. We will accept anybody from any background aged from 11 to whatever age: you can keep marshalling until whenever you feel you can't do it anymore.

The most important trait for being a marshal, aside from an interest in motorsport of course, is wanting to learn. It's not overly taxing, there are no exams that you have to prepare for, but it's good to be willing to learn from others' experience and from the training sessions, and then for that to enable you to pass the experience on to others. Working well with others and in a team are also important.

We always say you need a good sense of humour too, partly because you'll be stood outside in snowy, rainy, cold days as well as the ones where it's a bit too hot to be standing out in your orange overalls. Plus there may be nothing happening on your post so to be able to while away the time talking to other people is possibly a requirement as well!

The skills and experience you develop as a

marshal furthermore can help you elsewhere. I know of a number of people who've put their marshalling on their CV and it's got them to different places. Marshalling is a great leveller because, depending on your experience, it puts you in a position of authority and from any age you could be managing a team of marshals, as well as dealing with incidents, writing reports and using radio communications, all of which you may not get the opportunity to do in a work environment.

I know for example someone who went into the police force who started his marshalling as a cadet, so when he was aged under 18, and he then looked after cadets as he became older. That stood him in great stead to become a policeman because he was dealing with all age groups from the drivers to the cadets. It got mentioned in his interview for the police force.

And the cadets, who can start from aged 11 as mentioned, can gain so much confidence from marshalling. For example they're given the Tannoy paddock announcements to make and some of them you'd think 'oh they're never going to do that' and then you hear them! And their parents have said 'gosh I didn't expect them to do that!'

There are also other officials such as clerks of the course and scrutineers, and marshals are encouraged to look to those areas to see if that's where they want to progress into. There are schemes in place such as taster days where people spend time with the timekeepers, the clerks and the scrutineers.

I know a number of people who moved from being a marshal to a clerk and their marshalling experience has really helped them in the role, because if the clerk has got an understanding of what it's like as a marshal out on the bank it's a big bonus.

So how do you get involved? The British Motorsports Marshals Club runs taster days – unfortunately they are on hold because of Covid but we are hoping that we can reintroduce them in the not-too-distant future. You can sign up for a taster, or just get an indication of what's involved, on our website: marshals.co.uk.

If you sign up, someone will be in touch to tell you what happens next. For a taster day we normally invite people to a club event at their nearest circuit at a mutually convenient date. You'd sign on with the other marshals and then you'd be taken on a tour around the circuit: to the assembly area, pitlane, scrutineering, race control, as well as out on the posts themselves to see what marshals get involved in.

And in the afternoon you'll likely end up on post somewhere and spending time with the marshals and getting involved in whatever happens! Maybe you'd try your hand at flag waving too. So you'd definitely be doing it for real, though somebody there will 'hold your hand' so we wouldn't drop you in it completely!



Marshals get the best seat in the house – for free!

"We accept anyone, and it's important to have a good sense of humour!"

FEATURE

EUGENE DONNELLY

TWO DECADES AT THE VERY FOREFRONT OF IRISH RALLYING

The Irish Tarmac legend talks tragedy, triumph, multiple title victories and tales from a career that he is adamant isn't quite done yet. He tells all to **Luke Barry**



Donnelly could have made the grade internationally

Five Irish Tarmac titles and 18 international rally wins put Eugene Donnelly right at the top of the pile when it comes to successful Irish rally drivers.

But it's the humble, honest and hard-working ethos he brought to rallying that really helps him stand out from the rest.

Born in 1967 with a father who was a Ford dealer, Donnelly quickly caught the rallying bug. The Ford Escort Mk1 and Mk2s became hero cars and Ari Vatanen a hero driver and Donnelly's future became clear. He was going to become a rally driver, although he never had the aspirations of reaching the international stage like the youngsters of today.

Thanks to your questions, Donnelly speaks to MN about his biggest lows - including battles with World rally champions - the time he and Andrew Nesbitt shared a pot of tea and his text conversations with Hyundai team principal Andrea Adamo. But first...

Question: You were famous for your exploits in an Escort before your move to four-wheel-drive, but your progression appeared very methodical? Was that intentional?

Dan Pryde
Via email

Eugene Donnelly: "I won rallies when I was fairly young and it's pretty well known that I had a tragedy in my family [when Donnelly lost his brother] and it was an extremely sad event that just brought us away from rallying. I went to America for a few years and, when I came back, I was a very different person.

"When I was young, I'm pretty sure there was an opportunity there for me if I had pursued rallying through a professional route but when I came back in my late 20s everything was about the budget.

"I started just having fun, doing a few rallies in cars that I bought and sold and it was part and parcel of our business. I even got to the point where I started to break up cars and sold the engines off, gearboxes. I just rallied a car I knew I could rally on a Saturday and Sunday and sell on the Monday. As the years went on the results came and a little bit of sponsorship came, and I decided then to buy a decent car which was the Ford Escort G3 and see where we could go with it.

"At that rear-wheel-drive level, we had a huge amount of success and when that success came [we got] more support.

"I did the Irish Forestry championship in 2000 and Paul Nagle sat with me. The cars that we were beating... there were a lot of four-wheel drives on the stages at that time and we finished second in the points and were only beaten by a four-wheel-drive car - but still we were beaten. And I suppose that really was the thing in my head 'I'm going to have to get a four-wheel-drive car somewhere along the line to see what these things are like.'

Photos: Roy Dempster, Jakob Ebrey



The Ford Escort G3 flies high in 2000



The Celica, here in '02, flew on Tarmac stages



Time in the Corolla was bittersweet

"While we were doing the Forestry championship, I also competed on Tarmac in the G3. It was around 2001 where I bit the bullet and bought a [Toyota Celica ST185] Group A car. It was the ex-Andrew Nesbitt car and the car was well worn when I got it.

"But we set sail and the first rally I did we finished second and that just led me down that direction. Once I had a taste for that, getting to drive the Escorts again was a complete anti-climax because that Celica was a handful on gravel but on Tarmac you sat back and you drove it with one hand. It had power steering, good brakes, it was torquey, you could four-wheel drift it; it was a nice bit of kit albeit it was outdated at that time with World cars on the scene."

MN sets the scene: On the final stage of the final round and fighting for the 2004 Irish Tarmac Championship, rocks and debris had been planted in Donnelly's path in the middle of the stage, causing him to crash his Toyota Corolla WRC heavily at 100mph.

Question: How close was Eugene from walking away from the sport after the 2004 Cork '20' Rally sabotage incident?
Warren Boscher
Via Facebook

ED: "With that incident, you've got to understand the context. I'd come up from a family who were very close. My mother

and father worked hard and we had a family business and we just didn't have any issues. We grew up in Northern Ireland, trouble was all around but we grew up as an uneventful family, nothing traumatising had ever happened other than when I lost my brother.

"I got myself in a good position as far as the businesses were concerned. That bode well for 2004 when we had a go at the [Tarmac] championship. There were a lot of people that put a lot of work into that. We were a great team, and I was in a great position from a driving point of view.

"I still haven't fully satisfied myself as to why the incident took place on the Cork '20'. I have my own gut feelings, people have given their indication of what may have happened. To answer Warren's question, it is not something that I can put my hand on my heart and say that it didn't come from rallying and it's not something that I can say didn't come from my business life or my private life.

"You asked the question did I consider walking away? Absolutely. I did two or three hours of an interview when I arrived back in the hotel and the championship was being decided on that rally. I don't know who made the decision to come up with the solution to split [the title with Derek McGarrity].

"Certainly, I wasn't in a place to make that decision or even have an opinion on it.

To me it didn't really matter. Looking back, though, yeah it did matter but at the time it didn't. When I went into my room that night and for weeks afterwards, I really struggled. I struggled with trying to understand where this came from. That Christmas before the following season I remember some dark days. I wasn't going to return: I had my mind made up.

"I really think it was [my brother] Charlie who started working on me after Christmas. Galway was coming fairly fast and Paul [Kiely, co-driver] was very supportive. Derek [McGeehan] worked away in the background to get the car repaired which was no easy job.

"I was ready to walk away from rallying"

Eugene Donnelly

When it came to it, I remember doing the recce and I said to Paul after the recce was over 'don't be surprised whatever happens here'. He says 'is that a case of we don't do this rally?' and I said 'don't be surprised'. It was really right up until the startline I still had my doubts whether I was going to get in the car and compete. "It was only when I came off the first stage that the feeling went away. OK, this is the right place for me. There were four months where it was a really difficult time."

Question: I know the Manx has a special place in your heart. How much did it mean to prove you could do it somewhere other than on Irish soil? And what was the battle like with the British Rally Championship boys?

Henry Kerr
Via email

ED: "One thing that I do get a bit annoyed about is the [Bertie] Fisher and [Austin] MacHale era in Irish rallying; when those guys went to Britain and the British championship they were seen as massive heroes in Ireland.

"In my era I didn't have the opportunity to race those icons but people may not realise the competition that was there [in Ireland] with the serious cars that I was trying to beat; you had the likes of Derek McGarrity, Eamonn Boland and then the

British guys would dip in and out – I'm probably leaving out a few drivers here that were extremely quick.

"The first year I went to the Manx I struggled with the terrain. The car didn't work as well on it. I couldn't get the set-up right and we were second to Mark Higgins, but he just blew me away. I could not get over the pace that he was on. It was crazy stuff.

"I won it in the Subaru [in 2007]. Andreas Mikkelsen was there and he was no slouch so we had a big battle with him before he went off and that was extremely pleasurable to win, although the back half was a bit of a cruise. But that Subaru had that much grunt it suited that place. That was one of the defining moments because the car struggled in a lot of places but she was good there.

"The Subaru win was the more satisfying [of the two] but obviously the Corolla win [in 2006] was the first win on the Isle of Man and we celebrated, flipping hell! All my mates, we went back to Ireland and we celebrated for a week it was a huge achievement. And probably I was that intoxicated the following week to understand what I'd done!"

MN sets the scene: Marcus Gronholm entered Galway Rally in 2007 as preparation for the inaugural Rally Ireland in the WRC, and Donnelly was leading

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FEATURE

him after the first day before crashing out.

Question: Tell us more about Galway 2007 and how insane it was to be leading Marcus Gronholm?

Ian Scott

Via email

ED: “[Laughs]. It’s been one of the highlights of my career and one of the deepest low points of my career. If I hadn’t had the accident, if the car hadn’t been giving me trouble, if I had gone on to actually finish second in the rally and never beat Gronholm I think that year would’ve been very different...”

“I struggled from having that accident throughout the whole rest of the year. But the day itself, the start of the rally on the second day Paul [Kiely] turns around when we’re checking out of parc ferme and says: ‘Look behind you’. And I go ‘what’s wrong? What is it?’ He says: ‘It’s not every day you start a rally in front of Marcus Gronholm, a two-time World champion’ and he was perfectly right. That’s one of those memorable moments.

“The first day we were racing with him and, I don’t mean this to sound crude, but he and any of the famous drivers I’ve met they all go to the toilet the same way as I do. That’s the way he came across, there was no airs and graces. He took it fair on the chin that we were having a good battle but he didn’t want me to beat him, there was no two ways about it. He was properly there in the fight and we were having the proper conversations, it wasn’t mind games, it was totally genuine.

“That made it more special but we were struggling with the gearbox and hence I made the mistake. [It was] the biggest low point, I just couldn’t believe that it happened. And I know exactly what the car did, the way the gearchange went and in a split-second the car stepped out on me and I just couldn’t get over it that it happened. Finishing second to Gronholm would’ve been like winning the rally.”

Question: How does he remember the cooperation with Wevers Sport and why did the Skoda Fabia development [2007–2009] not deliver what the Corolla did? Does he hold special memories to them coming rallying in Ireland?

Dre Galiati

Via Twitter

ED: “I bought my Toyota Corolla from Erik Wevers and spent two days with him, and that built a relationship that has lasted a lifetime.

“We had so much success with the Corolla and Erik was instrumental in that. He’d have done anything from helping us with engineers to getting us parts to supporting us financially, he was so good to us.

“He did a deal to buy out the WRC Skoda package as well, similarly to what he did with TTE [Toyota Team Europe]. I had done a year with the Subaru in 2006 which was cost a fortune to run. At the end of the 2007 season Erik rang me and said ‘why don’t you try a Skoda, take it to Ireland, and do Rally Ireland with it?’ We struck a deal and I bought the car and he supported it.

“That was two or three weeks before Rally Ireland. The car came home but there was a fundamental geometry issue with the car. It needed a different bottom

arm for the bottom of the damper and we didn’t have time to get it modified.

“That meant we started the rally with the wrong ride height and the chance of a driveshaft snapping out of its coupling if you turned the lock too far the one way. That’s exactly what happened. I came into a real slippery bend on the third stage, had a real opposite lock on her and the driveshaft slipped out. But we got the car home, got the part modified and, in 2008, I decided I wasn’t going to do a full championship.

“We did a full championship in 2009 and I struggled a little bit at the start of Galway for pace, but it wasn’t the car it was me. By the end of Galway Rally we won the rally a little bit by default as Eamonn Boland and Kevin Lynch had car trouble. I went on to win the Circuit [of Ireland] in [too]. We went to the Jim Clark Rally and we won it and we went to Donegal and I really should’ve won. I was second and only lost the rally by 50 seconds but we had a gearbox problem on the first day and lost a minute and a half. My rally was over before it began.

“We won the Ulster Rally and had a great battle with Gareth MacHale. But going back to the question, Wevers was very supportive of me and that car. Even the last rally in the Corolla, him and Pieter Tsjoen came over just as a bit of a celebration and we had a great weekend and again had a couple of great nights afterwards. Wevers was a visionary from a privateer point of view.”

Question: Was it frustrating in the Mini [in 2012–2015] trying to compete against the Subaru?

Liam O’Connor

Via Twitter

ED: “It was very frustrating! Derek McGarrity put a big investment into the Minis because the 1600cc was taking over from the two-litre car. But in Ireland, you couldn’t get the power and when the Subarus came away from the factory they were running them at full chat, [pushing the engine] maps as far as they could get them.

“Derek was running the Mini within homologation. The first rally I did in the car [Galway 2012] I only lost by 1.3s. It’s been often said that if we had won that rally, Irish rallying would have been completely different as people would’ve seen it could beat the Subarus and might have gone out and bought one.

“The Mini was frustrating because I knew—even from my Skoda—how little power the thing had and I was driving the wheelnuts off it to get the times. I finished second again on Galway in 2013 but when I saw the budget that was taking it to run it, it was costing a fortune—it was as expensive if not more expensive than the Subaru. It was only really the second year I realised how bad it was.

“Not having won rallies and putting all that money there was a bit of a bitter pill and, in 2014, I said to Derek ‘OK we’ll try the car again and see how we get on’. I had quite a good budget gathered up but I did a pre-event test and had a bit of an off and damaged the rear spoiler on the car.

“Then I made a silly mistake on the rally by taking my eyes off the road on a narrow [section]. The car was quite wide. I had to



Donnelly conquered the Isle of Man stages



Tackling the Circuit of Ireland in 2006

put on the wipers and I went on the grass and the next thing I was off the road and hit the stone and knocked the front off it.

“It didn’t look to be an overly big accident but when the car came back, we went to get it repaired and the first estimate I saw for the repair bill was £60- or £70,000. The bill for the rear spoiler was £13,000. That was the price for the car, and then for it to not be competitive...”

“Derek would get frustrated at me for saying the car wasn’t competitive but it wasn’t, it wasn’t competitive against the two-litre cars. Maybe in Kris Meeke’s hands up against the guys here at the top of their game he might have scraped a win out of it, but I blew a fortune before I really realised how uncompetitive it actually was.

“Don’t get me wrong it was competitive against other 1600cc World cars but it wasn’t competitive against the Subarus. I blew away three years where I probably could’ve won one or two championships because, if I had have kept the Skoda or hired a Subaru, I probably could’ve got another title out of it.”

Question: Which of your five championship wins is your favourite?

Robert Medland

Via Facebook

ED: “Let’s go through them! The first title was bittersweet because of the way that it happened and the accident, I didn’t get to enjoy that. The 2005 title was the one I remember [most], albeit I would admit the competition was very stiff at the beginning of the year but it tapered off and it ended up a bit of a foregone conclusion, I won it quite easily.

“The ‘06 championship was the one I enjoyed the most. We had some great battles and just had a ball of a time that year and the celebrations were fantastic. On the last rally of the year [the Cork ‘20], Guy Wilks, Markko Martin and Mark Higgins were there and it was big party atmosphere. I think I finished the rally third [good memory, correct – Ed], didn’t really care where I finished.

“It was satisfying to win the championship in 2007 with the Subaru because we didn’t have a particularly good year with the crash in Galway, I got a puncture in Donegal which was a stupid mistake and, with Sebastian Loeb being there, it was satisfying to know I was on his pace whenever I needed to be.”

MN: I bet!

ED: “Paul [Kiely] always talks about the fact we were coming off the stages behind Loeb and Elena was standing on the side of the road waving us down to get our times. You have to pinch yourself. The most successful World Rally Championship crew stopping, waving Kiely down to get our times! Again, a bit like Marcus Gronholm, he turned out to be one of the nicest guys and one of the most down-to-earth people I’ve ever met.

“The 2007 championship was marred a

little bit by our sponsor’s company collapsing and I struggled to get that car through to the end of the year so to win the title was a big achievement. But the one that made me jump up and down was the win in 2009 in the Skoda because the car was an underdog.

“I had my old navigator Paddy Toner sitting with me. The car performed unbelievably well, other than when I put it off and crashed in Killarney when leading the rally. I was up against Gareth MacHale, who was firing everything but the kitchen sink at it and Tim McNulty, who was doing the same. There were three or four drivers were firing everything at it and here was I coming along on my Kumho tyres and underdog car and still winning the championship. That was unbelievably satisfying, so that is the one I think I’d put at the top.”

Question: Who was the toughest to beat on the stages? And who had the best craic?

Rick Connor

Via email

ED: “No doubt about it, [Andrew] Nesbitt was the toughest man to beat on the stage. He had such a knack of picking the stage he was going to clean you up on.

“There were places where Nesbitt wouldn’t get near me, I’d take half a second a mile out of him on lots and lots of stages and lots and lots of rallies. Then you go to a rally like Donegal and there were four or five stages you were not getting near him. You go to Killarney and you’d have been beating him and the next thing you landed on two or three stages that were just his stages and he’d blow you away.

“He was the toughest to try and beat and I think the only reasons I ever beat him were he’d either thrown the thing off the

“To be flagged down by Loeb was special”

Eugene Donnelly



The Prodrive-built Mini WRC was expensive – and not that rapid



Title in the Skoda in '09
was as an underdog

road or he'd have a puncture or his car broke down. I don't think I beat him fair and square in a battle.

"Who was the best craic? Definitely Nesbitt. Him and I had a great relationship before we became competitors as I was winning the National championship and he was winning the main rally.

"We always ended up in the same bar drunk as monkeys having the craic and we just built up a great relationship. I remember one night we sat drinking pots of tea from 0500hrs-0800hrs and I'm dead serious, three hours drinking tea, no alcohol, and we had the best bit of craic just the two of us."

Question: What are your future plans with the Proton Iriz RS, your current car?

Tara Evans

Via email

ED: "I'm 54 now so the aspiration isn't to come and beat the kids that are driving now. They are professional athletes now, they're not like we were in the day. Of course we took it seriously but we didn't go to the gym every night and we weren't disciplining ourselves the way they do it now.

"I was most proud of what I did with Hyundai in 2018. After Donegal 2017 when Robert Barrable crashed them, they weren't having much success, so I met with [Andrea] Adamo and [Hyundai customer boss] Andrew Johns and did a deal with them to create a brand in Ireland for the sale of the car.

"I remember Adamo asking how many cars can we sell, and I said 'We can sell five or six'. He laughed at me. We brought the first car home but my Achilles' heel is [that] I got involved with MRF Tyres at the same time. The tyre was not very

competitive then, so it put the car in a very bad light.

"The first rally the car didn't perform at all but to be fair to Philip Case and PCRS [which was running the car], Philip really took the mantle on it and he made it his goal to try to get the car to work. So while we were working on the tyre he was working on the damper.

"All the time we were gathering information and understanding of the car and we went to the Circuit of Ireland and knocked in some top-two, top-three stage times and close to Sam Moffett, which we were delighted with. I was working away with Hyundai to get Keith Cronin in the car to do the British championship, so Hyundai weighed in behind it and he was leading Ypres right up until the last stage and he got a puncture. That really showed the potential of the car.

"But, it was taking a big investment from me so I said to Hyundai why not support PCRS and so PCRS took the programme on, ran with it, and now you see what happened with six Hyundais in Ireland at one stage. Before Donegal 2019 Adamo sent me a message: 'You weren't wrong Irish man. We've just sold our sixth car into Ireland'. That was extremely satisfying.

"I was looking for another challenge after that and was still working with MRF, went and met with Mellors [Elliot Motorsport] at the Autosport show and we did a deal as he needed someone in the Proton Iriz RS and I wanted to develop the tyres. I think the car has got the potential; if we put a young, fit driver in it and gave them the tyre in it I don't think the car would be far away. I don't know what sort of budget we will have to go back rallying again to be honest, I'll have to wait and see, but everything is just on hold."



Donnelly and Adamo
had a Hyundai wager

**"Nesbitt
could
be the
hardest
to beat"**

Eugene Donnelly



Donnelly fought back after a shunt in 2007 to claim the title spoils

WRC REPORT: CROATIA RALLY



Even a road crash couldn't halt Ogier on Rally Croatia

OGIER COUNTS HIS LUCKY STARS AS HE SNATCHES GLORY FROM JAWS OF DEFEAT

World champion is still shaking his head after an unlikely victory his Yaris. By **Graham Lister**

When Sébastien Ogier calls it quits as a full-time WRC driver at the end of this season, he'll look back to the Croatia Rally, where he notched up career victory number 51, with a sense of disbelief.

Only Ogier's brilliance kept him out of the same ditch that spelled almost instant retirement for his Toyota team-mate, Kalle Rovanperä, on Friday's opening test.

That same brilliance was then needed to minimise time lost to a slow puncture on Saturday's SS13.

And it was also very much in evidence when the Frenchman's Yaris WRC briefly got out of shape through a compression on Sunday's deciding stage.

But it was a battered and bruised Yaris in which Ogier fought to regain control following an incident that so easily could have spelt retirement a few hours earlier.

Ogier and co-driver Julien Ingrassia were driving out of Zagreb to Sunday's opening stage when they were involved in a road accident. The occupants of both cars were unharmed and, although Ogier's factory Toyota was pointing where it should and was deemed fit for purpose, it was by no means at the top of its game.

"I had a big hurt in my back and, in the moment, I thought my rally was over," Ogier said. "Luckily the impact was on one of the strongest points of the car. It damaged the cosmetics a bit, but the wheel was straight and the rollage was untouched. Even the door foam protection was in so the safety was still there. But Julien was getting a lot of dust in his eyes and the aerodynamic was definitely not optimum."

Having led on Saturday night by 6.9s, Ogier headed to the penultimate stage 2.8s behind his Toyota team-mate Elfyn Evans, who'd gone fastest on SS17 and SS18 after what

RESULTS

World Rally Championship round 3/12

Event: Croatia Rally Where: Zagreb, Croatia When: April 22-25

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Sébastien Ogier/Julien Ingrassia	Toyota Yaris WRC	2h51m22.9s
2	Elfyn Evans/Scott Martin	Toyota Yaris WRC	+0.6s
3	Thierry Neuville/Martin Wydaeghe	Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+8.1s
4	Ott Tänak/Martin Järveoja	Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+1m25.1s
5	Adrien Fourmaux/Renaud Jamoul	Ford Fiesta WRC	+3m09.7s
6	Takamoto Katsuta/Daniel Barritt	Toyota Yaris WRC	+3m51.8s
7	Gus Greensmith/Chris Patterson	Ford Fiesta WRC	+3m58.8s
8	Craig Breen/Paul Nagle	Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+4m28.2s
9	Mads Ostberg/Torstein Eriksen	Citroën C3 Rally2	+10m00.8s
10	Teemu Suninen/Mikko Markkula	Ford Fiesta R5 MkII	+10m29.3s

WRC2: Ostberg/Eriksen; WRC3: Kajetan Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak (Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo); JWRC: Jon Armstrong/Phil Hall (Ford Fiesta Rally4) Championship: 1 Ogier 61; 2 Neuville 53; 3 Evans 51; 4 Tänak 40; 5 Rovanperä 39; 6 Breen 24; next Rally: Rally Portugal, May 20-23



Evans was on course to hold on to first place until a last-stage drama

Ogier described as a "strong morning" from the Welshman.

That deficit then grew to 3.9s after SS19 with just the closing 8.7-mile powerstage left.

Evans didn't need to go quickest to win the rally, but he couldn't afford to let Ogier take too much time. Although the first split, which put Ogier up on Evans by 1.4s, was not too untoward, the next split showed a significant swing in Ogier's favour to 3.4s, which put Evans under real threat.

Co-driven by Scott Martin, Evans responded by trimming his time loss to 2.9s at the third split and was seemingly

heading to victory when he got out of shape on a right-hander in the final kilometres. His Yaris mounted an earth bank and the loss of momentum heading onto the flat-out blast to the finish would prove his undoing.

"I don't think the actual mistake that much, it was just that there was such a long straight after it," Evans explained. "It was a bit more slippery than I expected on that corner but you have to take a few risks if you want to set the times, especially with things as close as they are and sometimes it doesn't work out."

Although he'd won the first Croatia



Ogier celebrates his 51st career victory in World Rally Championship

Rally to count for the WRC, Ogier had his own story to tell at the end of SS20.

"This stage was a bit crazy, one of the most difficult stage we've done," he said. "It was a very narrow road, a lot of small jumps, crests, blind corners, dirty corners, some very low-grip section. I had a last push for sure and a little moment also over a jump. I didn't expect the car to jump so much and I almost lost it on the landing. But you have to take some risks and we got the reward."

Thierry Neuville had been the driver in the ascendancy after four stages on Friday. He'd gone fastest on three of

them to lead by 7.3s at the midday halt. But a half-spin on SS5 and contact with a bank on SS8 meant Ogier completed Friday's running 7.7s adrift.

Ogier, who scored his 600th WRC stage win on SS7, for Friday afternoon reverted to a set-up he developed during testing ahead of the rally, which dialled out the understeer that had hampered him during the morning.

Having started leg two leading by 7.7s, Neuville returned to Zagreb for the midday service 19.6s down on Ogier in third position following a morning of frustration for the Hyundai-powered Belgian, which was compounded



Tyre selection dramas slowed Thierry Neuville



Fourmaux impressed with pace on WRC bow

STRESS TO SUCCESS FOR JWRC BATTLER ARMSTRONG

Jon Armstrong prospered while his rivals faltered for his maiden Junior WRC victory.

The Northern Irishman, who feared he might never compete again after a budget-depleting accident on Rally Sweden in 2020, benefited from Martin Koci's error to win by more than half a minute over Martins Sesks, last season's championship runner-up.

Koci had been on course for the win but the Slovakian hit a rock and broke a wheel on SS14, to hand Armstrong a lead he wouldn't relinquish over the closing six tests.

"It's amazing," Armstrong said. "After that crash in Sweden I didn't know if I was going to go rallying again. It's been a long battle but finally I was able to come back."

"It's a super-tricky rally, we didn't do any testing, it's the first rally me and Phil Hall have done together so it was really challenging."

"I found it so tricky on the recce because each stage is different from one another. It was a very stressful week, but it paid off and it's fantastic to win. I wouldn't have said that was possible beforehand, but we were smart and we tried to stay out of trouble."

Motorsport Ireland-backed William Creighton finished fifth.



Armstrong's Junior victory was redemption after 2020 shunt

by a broken brake disc on SS12.

The dramatic change of positions owed much to the respective tyre strategies of the factory Hyundai and Toyota teams.

Toyota opted for hard-compound Pirelli tyres, while Hyundai selected a combination of hard and soft-compound Pirelli covers in the hope they would be more suitable for the conditions.

However, dry stages and rising ambient temperatures meant the hard-compound option provided better grip and consistency, which was reflected by Toyota locking out the stage wins in the

morning with Ogier fastest twice and Evans and Takamoto Katsuta, with Daniel Barritt co-driving, posting a fastest time apiece.

Neuville went on the attack on Saturday afternoon and was quickest on SS15, where Ogier picked up his slow puncture nearing the finish.

"We tried to fight back when we had better tyres on the car but I had an issue with my jack and I couldn't change tyres all [through the] afternoon loop so my tyres were already a bit dead for the last stage," Neuville said at the end of a trying Saturday, which he completed 10.4s behind Ogier.

By winning SS19, Neuville started the final stage 8.0s off the lead. Then he overcooked it on a slow right-hand bend and would settle for third, one place ahead of team-mate Ott Tänak.

M-Sport's WRC2 graduate Adrien Fourmaux impressed on his World Rally Car debut in the WRC with two top-two stage times and fifth overall.

Katsuta, who was delayed by an off on Friday, demoted Gus Greensmith for sixth on the final morning when a brake and hydraulic issued slowed the Briton's M-Sport Fiesta.

Mads Ostberg won WRC2 with Kajetan Kajetanowicz topping WRC3.

Photos: M-Sport, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

DEFLATED BREEN TAKES HIS HYUNDAI TO A POINTS FINISH

Craig Breen was elated when he learned he'd finally got a shot at driving a Hyundai World Rally Car on a Tarmac round of the WRC. But after finishing eighth in Zagreb, the Irishman was more deflated.

With a one-day test to adapt to the i20 Coupe WRC on sealed-surfaces, Breen was always going to face a tall order to shine in Croatia.

However, he was a solid fifth after Friday's leg and on course to meet Hyundai's pre-event target.

But fifth turned to ninth when he punctured barely 100 metres into Saturday's first stage.

"I did the roundabout at the start," he said. "In the first pass of the recce, I couldn't go in there because there was a truck parked. I touched the kerb and had to

stop and change it."

Like team-mates Thierry Neuville and Ott Tänak, Breen was further hamstrung on Saturday by running a mixture of hard and soft-compound Pirellis when hard only proved the better option on dry and increasingly warm roads.

"We made a mistake with the tyre choice, but we tried to make the best of it and make our way through," Breen said after SS12.

There was some glimmer of hope when Breen and co-driver Paul Nagle went second fastest through the points-paying powerstage.

"It was difficult to go at 150% on those tricky stages but I enjoyed it and learned a lot. Hopefully it will not be too long until I am back in a World Rally Car."



Breen was left ruing a puncture and a mixed tyre strategy

INGRAM HITS HIS STRIDE WITH STRONG SHOWING IN WRC3

Chris Ingram began his two-year World Rally Championship campaign with fifth place in WRC3, telling Motorsport News afterwards that he and co-driver Ross Whittock are "back in the game".

Brit Ingram made finishing the Croatia Rally – his first start in a Rally2 car since he won the European Rally title in November 2019 – his sole priority due to his threadbare World-level experience.

"I'm really, really pleased that we're back in the game because we've got a rally under our belt now," said the 26-year-old. "It was like being thrown into the lion's den with all these rapid drivers who have been doing this for three or four years."

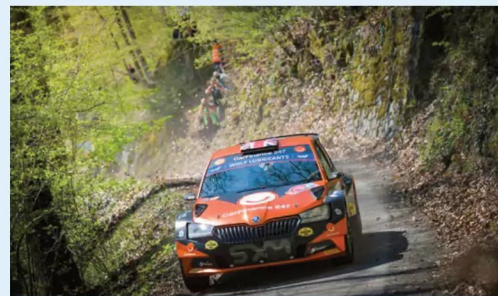
"But I've learned an amazing amount, not just about where I need to improve, but about myself."

"I don't celebrate anything that's not a podium. But the main thing was to get back competing and

finish and that's what I've done."

Ingram started the final leg in third place in WRC3, despite dropping time on Saturday afternoon with a bent steering arm – caused by a heavy compression – but slipped to fifth in the final order after an off into a field on Sunday's second stage, from which he emerged with another bent steering arm.

"It was honestly the hardest Tarmac rally I've ever done because the surface was so unpredictable, slippery and the stages were bumpy, narrow, twisty, fast, changing all the time. It was so hard to get into any kind of rhythm. Every stage time felt like a kick in the balls because there's nothing that can prepare you for the mental sharpness and the level of focus you need to keep the car on the road when you've been out for so long. I'm just so thankful I got this chance and now I need to keep working at it."



Brit Ingram took a steady fifth in class, but did not celebrate

RACING REPORTS

BRANDS HATCH: MGCC BY GRAHAM KEILLOH

APRIL 24-25

Photos: Gary Hawkins



Williams doubled up in the MG Cup

RACE WINNERS

Morgan Challenge
Races 1&2: Oliver Pratt (Morgan Plus 8)

Triple M Racing Challenge
Races 1&2: Oliver Sharp (MG N Type Magnette)

Equipe GTS 1
Race 1: Mark Ashworth (TVR Grantura Mk3); **Race 2:** Mark Owen (TVR Grantura Mk3)

Equipe GTS 2
Race 1: Lee Atkins (TVR Grantura 1800S); **Race 2:** Tom Smith (MGB)

Equipe Libre
Race 1: Chris Beighton (Sunbeam Le Mans Tiger); **Race 2:** James Haxton (Austin Healey 3000 MK1)

Equipe Pre '63/50s
Race 1: Roberto Giordani (Jaguar E-type DHC); **Race 2:** Peter Haynes (Lotus XI Le Mans)

MG Metro Cup
Races 1&2: Tim Shooter (Rover Metro GTi)

BCV8 Championship
Races 1&2: Ollie Neaves (MGB GT V8)

MG Midget & Sprite Challenge
Race 1: David Weston (MG Midget); **Race 2:** Michael Chalk (MG Midget)

MG Cup
Races 1&2: Mike Williams (Rover Metro GTi)

MG Trophy
Races 1&2: Sam Kirkpatrick (MG ZR 190)

WILLIAMS OVERCOMES TROUBLE FOR A WINNING BRACE



Sharp headed the Triple M Racing pack at Brands Hatch

Mike Williams winning MG Cup races is not a surprise, but his two wins at Brands Hatch were not simple. He wasn't sure if he would be able to take part at all due to technical problems with his Metro. And then, once arrived, he had two close battles with Morgan Short, son of racer and team boss Martin, just upgraded to a frontrunning MG ZS 180.

In race one Williams had to pass Short twice, as his first overtake was negated by countback after a red flag caused by Ian Boulton hitting the Surtees barriers and rolling. Then in race two Williams after a mid-distance spin had to recover the lead from Short, who

was impeded by a fuel shortage. "We had so many issues with the car, because of the new regs I've had to downgrade to a standard engine," said Williams. "It was just an awful week waiting to happen and all of a sudden it's become fantastic. It's still buzzing me."

The MG Metro Cup, which shared the track with the MG Cup, provided plenty of its own drama. Its top three runners came together at race one's restart, leaving Phil Goodwin leading. He soon though pulled off when his car lost drive.

Tim Shooter inherited first, while a fast-recovering Mark Eales – one of the trio in the restart contretemps – spun out of second

on fluid on the last lap. Shooter won the second race too after passing David Javes.

Oliver Sharp won both Triple M Challenge races for pre-war machines in his MGN Type Magnette. The first win was dramatic as leader Tony Seber spun at Surtees on the final lap, letting the closely pursuing Sharp by to win.

The first MG Midget & Sprite Challenge race also provided drama. David Weston prevailed in a four-car lead battle, seizing first when Martin Morris and Richard Wildman touched at Paddock. In race two Michael Chalk, the only one of race one's frontrunning quartet to appear, won with ease.

Ollie Neaves continued his 2020 BCV8 form in 2021's season-opener, winning both races from Russell McCarthy. Sam Kirkpatrick had a similar tale in the MG Trophy, twice holding off Fred Burgess.

Equipe Classic Racing provided no fewer than eight races. Peter Haynes with his Lotus XI Le Mans had an interesting weekend in the Pre '63/50s event. Having taken race one pole he missed the race start due to poor timekeeping! He relieved some of his blushes by winning race two by a lap.

Oliver Pratt won both Morgan Challenge races crushingly, in so doing beating an 18-year-old Morgan Brands Indy lap record.

LYDDEN HILL: CMMC BY JASON NOBLE

APRIL 24

SILHOUETTES STEAL THE SHOW WITH A BRACE OF BATTLES

Colin Smith and Lewis Smith (both Vauxhall Tigras) and Ray Harris in a Ginetta G40R squabbled for position in a tense Intermarque Silhouette Series opener at the Classic and Modern Motorsport Club's Lydden weekend.

It came down to a tussle at North Bend where it seemed inevitable the trio wouldn't all come out unscathed.

Lewis Smith made the most of an inspired look at Devil's Elbow to give him an excellent run on the leading Colin Smith, and Harris, spying a gap on the apex at the hairpin also had a go. Remarkably they all made it through, National Hot Rod ace Colin Smith holding the others at bay.

But as the jostling continued in race two, Harris out front thanks

to a staunch move on initial leader Danny Smith, was able to take advantage and secure a healthy gap upwards of four seconds to prevent any challenge from Colin and Lewis Smith and Mike Thurley.

Lewis Smith parked up with smoke pluming out the back of his Tigra, allowing Colin Smith to take second from Thurley (Ginetta G40).

In Tin Tops, Warren Johnson took a pole, win and second in his Peugeot 205GTI which emerged at a couple of Brands Hatch one-offs last season after nearly 20 years in hibernation.

Daniel Fisher's Honda Civic Type R took the early lead, but Johnson's race long pressure behind allowed him to slide past at North Bend before Fisher, all

out of shape across the start line, clattered the barriers and brought the race to a premature end.

Dave Hutchins (also Type R) held his nerve to keep the rapid Johnson behind in race two.

Rod Birley took a monopoly of wins in Super Saloons and Modified Fords, a last-to-first masterclass in Saloons race one the finest of this races.

RACE WINNERS

Tin Tops
Race 1: Warren Johnson (Peugeot 205GTI); **Race 2:** Dave Hutchins (Honda Civic Type R)

Intermarque Silhouette Series
Race 1: Colin Smith (Vauxhall Tigra); **Race 2:** Ray Harris (Ginetta G40R)

Super Saloons Series
Races 1&2: Rod Birley (Ford Escort WRC)

Modified Ford Series
Races 1&2: Rod Birley (Ford Escort Cosworth WRC)

CMMC Classic Challenge
Race 1: Roy Charnierlain (Triumph TR250); **Race 2:** Alan Hersey (Scimitar GTE)

DONINGTON PARK: MSVR BY KIERAN RENNIE

APRIL 24-25

FORTAG'S PHANTOM PENALTY CAN'T HALT WINNING CHARGE

Saturday at Donington Park kicked off with the Ford Focus Cup with pole sitter, Scott Parkin, leading from start to finish. In race two's reversed grid clash, Spencer Fortag led early on but was threatened with a jumped start penalty. It was later rescinded. Rudd was second in the second event.

The Toyo Tires Racing Saloons pack had no answer for Stuart Waite in his BMW M3. He led

from start to finish in both heats.

The opening round of the Enduro KA Series saw star of the show, Nick Tandy showing his class. In his first stint, Tandy put a lap on the field. His team-mate Elliot Mason, however, slid off, costing them a solid chance of a win.

Ultimately, Team Octane Junkies drove with constancy and solid pace to take victory with Martyn Smith,

Adam Smith and Basil Ward at the controls.

Sunday was set alight by the Heritage FF1600 line-up with the opening race won from the early start by Josh Smith. The six-car scrap behind the leader raged until the end with Alex Walker taking second.

With shadows lengthening at the end of the day, the Formula Fords took to the track for a second time.

Again, ultra-close racing culminated in six cars, nose to gearbox with just two minutes to go. Teenager, Walker took the win and retained the Champion of Donington title.

The MSV Supercup was won by Nick Jackson and Ollie Pigley in their Seat. But they were handed the victory by a one-lap penalty for a short pit stop for Darren Goes in his Seat Supercopa.

RACE WINNERS

Ford Focus Cup
Race 1: Scott Parkin; **Race 2:** Spencer Fortag

Toyo Tires Racing Saloons
Race 1&2: Stuart Waite (BMW M3)

Enduro KA
Race 1&2: Martyn Smith/Adam Smith

Production Golf & BMW

Championship
Race 1: Jackson Goodrum (BMW E30); **Race 2:** Jack Watts (BMW E30)

Teekay Couplings Production GTI
Race 1&2: Simon Vercoe

Z Cars & New Generation Production BMW
Race 1&2: Edd

Giddings (BMW Z3)
MSVR Elise Trophy
Joshy Molnulty

Heritage FF1600
Race 1: Josh Smith/Van Diemen JL131; **Race 2:** Alex Walker (Spectrum D11c)

MSV Supercup
Nick Jackson/Ollie Pigley (Seat Supercopa)

SNETTERTON: MSVR BY PETER SCHERER

APRIL 24

HAMMOND AND PEARCE TOP THRILLING MINI CLASHES

Matt Hammond managed to escape to win the first Mini Challenge Trophy race. Lewis Saunders and Dominic Wheatley initially disputed second, soon joined by Ricky Page and defending champion Harry Nunn.

With two cars off at Riches, the race was red flagged with Page claiming a late second over Saunders while Wheatley headed Nunn to complete the top five.

Starting from a partially reversed

grid, the second race built up to a fantastic crescendo. Lee Pearce had led out of Palmer on the second lap but Nunn, Hammond, Page and Wheatley were soon in the frame again. Pearce and Nunn shared a couple of exchanges, before arriving at Coram for the last time. Nunn found his path blocked, so Pearce won the race to the line from Nunn, Wheatley, Hammond and Page. All were covered by only 0.387s.

Matt Bell won the first Radical SR1 Challenge race from lights to flag. Jerome De Sadeleer had been second until red flags forced a restart. Then he was blocked by Michael Clark's RXC Spyder. He recovered from a grassy moment to take fourth behind Anthony Ayres. De Sadeleer edged out Bell into Wilson on the opening lap of race two to take a comfortable win with Clark in third.

Clark had the early lead in the

Enduro race, but both Bell and De Sadeleer became stuck behind the Spyder as it was quick on the straights and slow in the corners. Bell's challenge at Murray's put him off track, but after Clark retired De Sadeleer went clear from Bell and John Macleod.

It was a double for Will Hunt in the SR1 Cup. James Lay started strongly and was second in both races on his racing debut.

Photo: Richard Styles



Hammond took Mini glory

RACE WINNERS

Mini Challenge Trophy
Race 1: Matt Hammond; **Race 2:** Lee Pearce

Radical Challenge
Race 1: Matt Bell; **Races 2&3:** Jerome De Sadeleer

Radical SR1 Cup
Races 1&2: Will Hunt

RACING REPORTS

SILVERSTONE: 750MC BY RACHEL HARRIS-GARDINER
APRIL 24-25

PACKED STANDALONE TYPE RS GRAB THE HEADLINES

Two new championships made their full debuts at Silverstone's 750 Motor Club meeting.

On Saturday, the Tegiwa Type R Trophy had a big grid and plenty of talking points on its first event as a standalone series. Adam Shepherd won the very combative first race after Luke Rosewell received a five-second penalty for exceeding track limits. Lee Deegan had led for most of the way but got into a slide at Copse and dropped two places on track. He got his own back in race two, holding off Shepherd and keeping clear of Rosewell, with whom he had tangled in race one.

The Ma7da Series was the second new championship and the first race provided a classic slipstreaming battle, with a five-way scramble for the first win. Danny Andrew was the victor by a tiny margin. He was far more in control in race two and it was second place that was being fought over, by four cars this time. David Mason led the chasing pack home.

Chris Mills (BMW M3) won the 45-minute Roadsports race

from Jamie Sturges's Seat Leon, although the two were closely matched and never more than a few seconds apart.

This event was punctuated by a red flag early on; a first-lap pile-up at the back of the circuit contributed to an over-abundance of beached cars to be cleared.

Barry McMahon dominated the Alfa Romeos in his 156 but was given a run for his money by Gareth Haywood, who had not raced since 2012. Haywood's GTV developed coolant problems in Race 1 but he came back for Race 2, where he challenged McMahon for the lead until he was bumped from behind and lost some time, having to settle for second.

Sports Specials provided its usual mix of esoteric kit cars, including the Eclipse of Martin Gambling which won race one, from another Eclipse driven by Paul Collingwood. It was the fastest in Race 2 as well, but its electrics gave up early on, after Collingwood had already retired with a misfire. The consistent Anton Landon was the winner in his Cyana Mk2.



Type R Trophy race two winner Lee Deegan leads the victor from race one, Andy Shepherd



Danny Andrew, ahead here, managed to maintain his advantage in both Ma7da racers

RACE WINNERS

750 Formula

Race 1: Mark Glover (Racetests Falcon); **Race 2:** Ed Pither (PRS 10)

Type-R Trophy

Race 1: Adam Shepherd (Honda Civic Type-R); **Race 2:** Lee Deegan (Honda Civic Type-R)

BMW Car Club Racing

Race 1&2: Niall Bradley (BMW E46 M3)

Alfa Romeo Championship

Race 1&2: Barry McMahon (Alfa Romeo 156)

Tegiwa Roadsports Series

Chris Mills (BMW M3)

F1000 Championship

Race 1&2: Lee Morgan (Uedi Mk6/7); **Race 3:** Elliott Mitchell (Uedi Mk6/7)

Ma7da Series

Race 1&2: Danny Andrew (Ma7da)

Classic Stock Hatch

Race 1&2: Stewart Place (Peugeot 205 GT)

Sports Specials

Race 1: Martin Gambling (Eclipse SM1); **Race 2:** Anton Landon (Cyana Mk2)

Sports 1000

Race 1: Ryan Varnow (Spire GT35); **Race 2:** Michael Roots (Mittell MC-53)

SILVERSTONE: BARC BY STEVE WHITFIELD
APRIL 25


Seale and Stanley picked their way to Britcar success



Endaf Owens (ahead here) was twice in the Mini Miglia mix

LAMBORGHINI PAIR TAKES TWO IN BRITCAR THRASHES

John Seale and Jamie Stanley scored a double-victory in the opening round Britcar Endurance Championship on the Silverstone International circuit at the wheel of a Lamborghini Huracan GT3.

Seale was beaten away from pole in race one by Richard Wells and Abbie Eaton, but a collision between the two Praga drivers at Village corner gifted him the lead back. A 10-minute safety car period was required after Luke Davenport crashed his Ligier JS2-R heavily into Class 4 rival George Heler's TCR at Vale, forcing many teams into making their mandatory pitstop earlier than planned. Seale handed over the leading car to Stanley, who went on to take a comfortable win ahead of the class-winning Praga of

Charlie Martin and Jack Fabbry.

A seven-car pile-up on the opening lap of race two caused a 20-minute caution period. When racing resumed Seale and Stanley dominated again, while Eaton and Gordie Mutch came through the field to win the Praga class and take second overall. Martin and Fabbry took second in class despite the latter spinning when a GoPro camera fell into the pedal assembly.

Simon Baker and Kevin Clarke took two wins in the Britcar Trophy in a BMW 1 Series, with Jasver Sapra and Lucky Khara's BMW M3 and Mark Lee's Ginetta G56A providing the competition.

The Mini Miglia Challenge provided some of the closest racing of the weekend. Endaf Owens pipped British Touring Car title

winner Andrew Jordan to victory in the first of the Miglia races, with eight cars embroiled in the lead battle. The second race was won by Nick Padmore, with Jordan a narrow second once again.

Joe Thompson took a pair of wins in the Mini Se7en series, despite frenetic battles in both races with reigning champion Jeff Smith. Smith dropped down the order after making a poor start from pole in the first encounter before recovering to take the fight to Thompson late on. The pair started on the fourth row for the reversed-grid second race, but wasted no time in moving to the front. The lead changed several times in the final seven minutes, but it was Thompson who again prevailed by a slender margin.

RACE WINNERS

Britcar Endurance

Races 1&2: John Seale/Jamie Stanley (Lamborghini Huracan GT3)

Britcar Trophy

Races 1&2: Simon Baker/Kevin Clarke (BMW 1 Series)

CTCRC Pre 66 Touring Cars

Races 1&2: Peter Smith (Ford Lotus Cortina)

CTCRC Pre 83 Touring Cars/JEC Saloon & GT

Races 1&2: Tom Robinson (Jaguar XJR6)

Mini Challenge - Miglia

Race 1: Endaf Owens; **Race 2:** Nick Padmore

Mini Challenge - Se7en

Races 1&2: Joe Thompson

CTCRC Historic Thunder Saloons / BOSS

Races 1&2: Richard Wood (Holden Commodore)

CTCRC Pre 95 & Pre 03 Touring Cars

Races 1&2: AJ Owen (Honda Civic Type-R)

VW Racing Cup / TCR & TCR UK

Race 1: Max Hart (Hyundai i30 N TCR); **Race 2:** Lewis Kent (Hyundai i30 N TCR)

CADWELL PARK: BARC BY PETER SCHERER
APRIL 24-25

HONOURS EVEN BETWEEN CATON AND HAND IN FRANTIC JUNIOR SALOONS

Harvey Caton and Charlie Hand shared the victory spoils in the Junior Saloons.

Hand had just taken the lead from Caton in race one when red flags halted the proceedings. At the restart, Hand had to retake Alfie Jeakins for second. He did it on the first lap, but Caton was already in the clear for his maiden victory.

Hand got his reward and first win in the second race when another restart left him clear

and, with Caton off on the second lap, Jeakins was second from Aaron Walker.

Miles Rudman and Jack Parker both had wins in Saturday's Legends heats, with Parker set for a repeat in the final after demoting Chris Needham. But after they fell over each other on the last lap, Stephen Whitelegg took the win, from Sean Smith and Rudman.

It was Rudman and John Mickel to the fore in Sunday's

heats, before Nick Bridgeman led the final. With red flags flying for a premature end, Bridgeman retained the win, from a duelling Rudman and Nathan Anthony.

There was no catching Peter Sparrow in the 2CVs, with the defending Champion taking a lights-to-flag double. The battles for the rest of the podium places were considerably closer, with Sandro Proietti and Kris

Tovey exchanging lap after lap

in race one, before settling in Proietti's favour.

It was Luca in the Proietti car instead of father Sandro for race two, but he had the same script to dice and duel with Tovey. Their exchanges went the Proietti way too, settled at Chris Curve on the last lap.

For the first half of the opening Mighty Mini race, Neven Kirkpatrick and Ian Slark exchanged repeatedly. But Kirkpatrick then took

charge to secure victory, before Slark has reversed the order at the second attempt.

It was nearly a winning double for Alex Cursley in the Hyundai Coupe Cup. He led Alastair Dendy from the opening lap in race one, before Dendy's patience paid off, taking the race two winnings on the last lap.

There was another double winner when Paul Roddison's Mazda MX-5 claimed the spoils in both Max5 races.

RACE WINNERS

Junior Saloons

Race 1: Harvey Caton; **Race 2:** Charlie Hand

Legends

Races 1&4: Miles Rudman; **Race 2:** Jack Parker; **Race 3:** Stephen Whitelegg; **Race 5:** John Mickel; **Race 6:** Nick Bridgeman

2CV

Races 1&2: Peter Sparrow

Mighty Minis

Race 1: Neven Kirkpatrick; **Race 2:** Ian Slark

Hyundai Coupe Cup

Race 1: Alex Cursley; **Race 2:** Alastair Dendy

Max5 Racing

Races 1&2: Paul Roddison (Mazda MX-5 Mk4)

GETTING OVER THE LINE

TECHNICAL COLUMN PROVIDED BY WITHAM MOTORSPORT DISTRIBUTORS OF MOTUL AUTOMOTIVE LUBRICANTS



The 2013 BTCC title winner Andrew Jordan tells us why he is proud to be carrying the Motul colours into the 2021 National Mini Miglia Challenge

I started my campaign in the Mini Miglia Challenge last weekend at Silverstone on the international circuit and it left me with a massive grin on my face.

It still amazes me how fast you can go in these little pocket rockets: you might think you have time to read a book as you go the full length of the Hangar Straight, but there is so much work to do behind the wheel, you never get a moment's rest. They are just so much fun – and the slipstream effect is bonkers.

I have a 1960s road-going Mini and a Mini was my first ever race car in Junior Rallycross, so I have a real affinity with the cars. I just love them. They are so pure, they are simple to work on and they are so direct to drive. The steering does exactly what you want it to, you can influence it as a driver a huge amount, you are sitting on the floor and it is probably as close to a kart as you can get for a race circuit.

And in the Miglia Challenge it isn't only about the fact it is a Mini. It is about the fact that the racing is so close. If the racing was the same in something like a Fiat 500, I would probably be going to have a crack at it. The level of competition is what draws you in.

I am using the same car as I used for selected outings last year, but we are building up a new one at the Jordan Racing Team. There's nothing wrong with the one we have, but we want to put a few JRT touches on our new car and we aren't going to rush it and it will probably be out in the second half of the year. Part of the fun for us is the actual build programme, as much as anything else.

And that is where getting the right partners involved with us too is important. I have Motul branding on my Miglia, and it just seemed like a natural fit for me because we have an exclusive deal to use Motul products across all of the historic cars we run. We have 40 historic cars that we operate across various series and they all use Motul's products.

It isn't just the case of putting a sticker on a car: the relationship is so much deeper than that. When you look at the historic cars we build at the Jordan Racing Team, they are all highly stressed because you are always looking for those last tiny bits of performance. I know it might sound like a cliché, but we are very fussy about what products we use on any of our cars because otherwise it can undo all the hard work we put into them.

When we make a judgement on what products to use, it isn't only about the help with performance. The other important aspect is helping with the longevity of the parts within the



Photos: Jakob Ebrey

Jordan has a long-standing love affair with Minis, and he says it is like handling a kart on the circuits



AJ knows that good products aid performance



Jordan: ready for a (nearly) full campaign in Miglia

car and the reliability. It is crucial, especially when you look at the value of the cars that we operate.

Everything we use will have Motul products. It really works for Motul too, because it is a way for them to spread the message about what they do on their classic car range.

I am delighted to take Motul with me on my journey in the Mini Miglia Challenge this year too. I am planning to do the entire championship, but there might be one clash later on in the year with some of my historic customer work.

There is a race in Vallerlunga in Italy that I am supposed to be at, but if that gets cancelled,

then I can do the whole Mini line-up. I feel so much more prepared this year than I was when I took my first steps in the series in 2020.

Although I have done a lot of racing in my career, there is still a knack to getting the most out of a Mini and I feel much more at home behind the wheel of one now. I have got my head around driving it – which sounds daft because it is only a Mini, but there is a knack because they are quite quirky – and we are in a much better place with car set-ups and things like that. It actually feels like our car now, and I am licking my lips for the rest of the season ahead.



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FEATURE

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



THE LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE BTCC SEASON LAUNCH

ITV Sport's commentator **David Addison** joined the tin-top teams at Silverstone to unearth some storylines ahead of the 2021 battles

The 29 entrants for this year's British Touring Car Championship gathered at Silverstone last Thursday for the category's season launch and there was much to be intrigued about.

As rival teams eyed each other nervously and discussed the latest models and driver swaps that have proliferated over the five months since the engines were switched off, the true arbiters – the stopwatches – were readied. At the end of six hours of open track time, there were no solid answers but a decent hint as to who will be at the sharp end.

ITV Sport's David Addison has a habit of nosing into garages when he shouldn't, and he gives us his lowdown on the 10 major talking points ahead of the fresh competition.

"I am not here to make up numbers"

Gordon Shedden



1

Shedden is back and as hungry as ever

GORDON SHEDDEN IS STILL A FLYING SCOTSMAN

Gordon Shedden is gonna be fast. There. Made a terribly obvious point. Let's face it, Shedden is a potential champion and even if his WTCR campaign didn't rack up the silverware he hoped for, he is back with a renewed competitive desire as he rejoins Team Dynamics to pilot its FK8-spec Honda Civic Type R.

He has nothing to prove: he is a race winner and a champion but is

back because he loves the championship and wants to keep on winning.

"I'm not just here to make up the numbers," he said. "I'm here because I want to win and I love the championship and the racing."

He is unquestionably the number one driver in the team, too. You could argue he was the team leader before he left the BTCC [at the end of 2018] as his results were better

than those of then teammate Matt Neal, but with Matt stepping sideways in a driver mentor role, Shedden is the trailblazer for Halfords Racing with Cataclean.

There is the subplot of brother-in-law Rory Butcher in a manufacturer entry Speedworks Toyota to keep an eye on, but don't be surprised if we write about champion Shedden at the end of the season.

One hundred on the radar for Jason Plato

"I didn't watch the BTCC last year. I don't really like motorsport if I'm not in it."

So spoke Jason Plato at the season launch at Silverstone, before conceding that eventually he missed his fix of racing and is very pleased to be back in a car.

Virus complications meant he missed last season at the wheel of the Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall, but he

is back and raring to go.

Plato, a 97-time race winner, is ideal for the BTCC. You can use all the clichés here about pantomime villain or Marmite character, but the truth is he is what the BTCC paddock needs and the championship is ideal for him.

Yes, he does Goodwoods, but Plato isn't someone to go off and pot-hunt in a club racing championship just

for the sake of driving a car: he wants to be in a championship where every lap, every position involves a battle, a fight.

As he will quickly remind you, he won his last BTCC race, at Brands Hatch in 2019, but whether a year away will affect him remains to be seen. He reckons not and is still aiming for that 100 wins, but it won't be easy. Come what may, he will make an impact!

2

It is all go to get Plato back on track in 2021



3

ASH SUTTON READY TO BRING THE THRILLS



Sutton has consistency

A triple champion? Very possibly. Ash Sutton is as motivated as ever and the way he and the Laser Tools Racing Infiniti went last season suggests that he will be very hard to beat once more.

Sutton is an exciting driver, a joy to watch when on a neck-and-neck qualifying effort or a raceday charge, and if the BMR-engineered Infiniti is as good as last year, or better, there is no

reason to suggest that a third title isn't achievable.

Whether he is prepared to temper his driving style, where half a gap present an opportunity, in favour of banking points will be

interesting to watch. He and engineer Tony Carrozza already use a safe word (at Brands Hatch in November it was, "don't") but terrifyingly, Sutton hasn't peaked yet.

He is maturing and improving season on season meaning that more race wins and titles should be assured. If continuity is key in the BTCC, Sutton is in a very good starting place.



A new mount for Tom Ingram in 2021

4 TOM INGRAM: REMEMBER THE NAME – AND THE TEAM...

There is a swear jar in the ITV commentary box. It is there for every time Tom Ingram and Toyota are used in the same breath.

It will take a bit of getting used to Ting no longer being part of the Speedworks family, but that is

history now and he is buzzing about the season ahead. Excelr8 gives him new commercial opportunities and works well for him, but the downside has to be that this is a relatively new team at this level and it is a car that hasn't yet won.

However, in Ingram's armoury is Spencer Aldridge who worked wonders at Speedworks on the Avensis and Corolla and has already waved his magic and over elements of the Hyundai. Ingram and Aldridge are a great double-act

and it shouldn't be a surprise if they are at the pointy end of the grid early in the season. Also, with team-mates, Ingram has more data coming back to help development and someone else to gauge himself against.

CAN MOTORBASE MAKE THE GRADE?

Motorbase is the big unknown entering 2021. Over the winter came news of Mark Blundell's involvement commercially and then of David Bartrum selling the team to Pete Osborne and Shaun Hollamby.

Motorbase is a team that has always been on the verge of making the A-grade in the BTCC but never quite doing it.

So this was a season that was set to see if Motorbase would move forward with an injection of new blood and new ideas, but as the

season launch day dawned, news came that Hollamby was out of the team and that Bartrum would be back on race weekends to oversee things. Where that leaves Motorbase in the pecking order is unclear.

There are some people from the old MB Motorsport/AmD days and existing Motorbase people so that needs to gel, while four cars is a big ask for any team to run. Jake Hill spearheads the driving force and it is to be hoped that he isn't compromised as he is too good a talent to waste.



Hill is likely to be a star performer this year



6 Black liveries are the new black for the BTCC line-up

Are you kidding? Black cars everywhere. Somewhere along the line, the BTCC grid has produced a lot of black cars for this season, all looking smart in their own right but not leaping out at you. There is the Ginesters/Tom Ingram Hyundai, which is a familiar colour scheme, and the Rick Parfitt Hyundai is spectacular in its colours. You can see it from the moon, probably...

The Speedworks Toyotas look very corporate, very Toyota, which the brand has wanted for a

while, while the BTC Racing Hondas are expected to look different for the opening races, but the smartest car on the grid? Hard to say. Maybe once a pack of black cars appears on camera at Thruxton, a few teams may introduce a splash of colour...

If I have to plump for one car, Sam Osborne's Motorbase colours look great, but I can't help feel that with time on their hands the graphic designers couldn't have been a bit more...creative.



Goff was on the pace

7 CUPRA KICKING UP A STORM ALREADY

Team Hard's Cupra Leons look the business and are a real credit to Tony Gilham and his band of enthusiastic supporters in Kent.

You wonder how Gilham does it, but no matter what happens to his cars, or a driver's budget, the team is always at the next event and always fulfilling its obligations to the championship.

That Jack Goff ended the Silverstone test day second fastest underlines the potential

that the Cupra has, on soft tyres admittedly, although its boxy shape might hurt it a little at certain circuits like the Toyota Corolla, for example.

But building the four cars is only the start of the process: the hard work starts now to keep developing and to keep in the game. Goff and the returning Aron Taylor-Smith are proven race winners and deserve to be up at the pointy end, but the pressure is on Team Hard now to deliver the tools for the job.



This is a landmark season for Edwards

8 EDWARDS READY TO BLAZE HER TRAIL

Jade Edwards deserves to be on the BTCC grid. Fact. Not as a token female racer, not as a PR exercise, but because she is a very capable racer and has worked blooming hard to get this far.

Silverstone last season proved two things: one, was how much effort she put into her racing and her marketing, the second was how well she did with very little testing. Now, at BTC Racing she has a big chance to

shine. It is a team that has had some upheaval over the winter but there are some very capable people involved with Mickey Sargent now as team manager.

She is a feisty racer, stands no messing, and as a third generation racer has the sport in her veins. She has the capability to be fighting for top 10 finishes as the season progresses. If the team can put its bad luck of 2020 aside, she should go well.

9 GOING FRONT TO BACK FOR TOM CHILTON

Tom Chilton, that ultra-committed racer, in a rear-wheel drive BMW? Something to savour. It's not entirely new to him, as he raced a sports-prototype Zytek in 2007, but once he is fully comfortable with a rear-wheel drive touring car he should fly.

This is a big season for

Ciceley Motorsport as well, with a brace of BMW 3 Series at its disposal and a teammate who can help Adam Morgan make another step forward as



Tom Chilton's BMW

well. Chilton is doing well so far in learning how to speak northern. He is fully aware that lunch is dinner, dinner is tea and tea is a brew. His northern accent needs work, think Dick van Dyke trying to do Paddy McGuinness, but all round he should be a serious contender for multiple wins.

Parfitt to experience the wild side of life

Note to self: must find a list of Status Quo song titles to crowbar into commentary at some stage...

Rick Parfitt Jr will be a breath of fresh air on the grid this year and is the only rookie driver as well. It's a big ask for him, coming from GT racing where, fierce as it is, it is a different

kind of fierce racing from the BTCC. For RPJ, that is part of the appeal and an opportunity to test himself, to improve as a driver. In GT racing there was a co-driver to help. Here, it is all down to the driver.

Parfitt has become a very accomplished racer and is a proper motorsport

enthusiast, evinced by a stint selling adverts for MN two decades ago! How he gets on will be interesting because not only is he new to the BTCC he is a team in only its third year in the championship and a car in its second without a win to its name. A slow burn, possibly, but he'll get there.



Rock and roll: Parfitt

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RALLY REPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS
IN ASSOCIATION WITH MSNR

Photos: SMJ Photography



WRC2 man Yates won six stages



Frank Bird was on the pace despite learning his new mount

YATES LEADS THE YOUNG PRETENDERS FOR SNETTERTON STAGES GLORY

It was a battle of the up-and-comers in Norfolk as WRC2 man Rhys Yates pips Frank Bird for Motorsport News Circuit Rally triumph. By **Dan Mason**

WRC2 battler Rhys Yates battled off competition from Frank Bird to take a hard-fought Snetterton Stages triumph as the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship returned following four months out of action.

In a battle of youth from very different racing backgrounds, it was off-road pitted against sportscar experience for top honours in the second event of the season in Norfolk. Experience paid off for the former, Yates, but both enjoyed a dice that remained nip and tuck until the final time check after eight on-the-limit stages.

After a Donington Park domination back in the season opener in December, Audi GT competitor Bird would be forced to defend his Snetterton win last season in a different beast from his norm.

Set up against WRC and BRC star Yates, Bird began with "only a few miles" under his belt in a similar M-Sport prepared Ford Fiesta R5 – his trusty ex-Federico Villagra Focus WRC underrepairs until the Neil Howard Stages.

After one trip around the 300 circuit he was already smitten with his new toy. "It's like a little go-kart," said Bird after SS1, who would have matched his main rival Yates albeit for a moment at a troublesome chicane – instead three seconds shy.

Experience may have been to Yates' advantage initially, but he too had a joker card playing against him. "It's my first time at Snetterton," he admitted. "I've had a look around it, but [SS1] was my first time driving around it –

some comers are a lot quicker than you think."

They say it comes in threes, and that proved the case with the morning's opening trio of stages. His eye now in, Yates took his pace into SS2 and again produced the goods, going three seconds faster than Bird to slightly extend that cushion. A stage later, the same margin ensured a gap of nine seconds to the championship leader.

It took until stage four for the trend to be broken. A moment at a chicane for the pushing Bird – matching his man until then – increased the lead to 15s into the lunch break. Yates was now utilising a different strategy of a harder tyre compound after his early experiences.

"It's weird because the tyres were cold, then stayed cold, then suddenly went off quickly," he said.

With enough miles under his belt in the new R5, Bird entered the second half of the event, more confident, and the fight tightened further. Both cancelled each other out with near identical times on stages five and six, Bird briefly stopping the rot with his first bragging rights of the day on the first of those to keep the pressure on.

Yates rolled up his sleeves however to add another second to his lead, and sealed the deal despite a late Bird surge on the final run to confirm his first MNCRC victory by 14s, giving co-driver James Morgan the perfect birthday present.

Both enjoyed their fight, Bird describing it his "most enjoyable yet". Mark Kelly was a distant but solid third from Elliot Payne's superb Ford Fiesta debut – lacking a

restrictor – in fourth place.

The sixth stage of the day provided the biggest shake-up elsewhere down the remainder of the top 10.

Firstly, still early days into a GT project, former double Snetterton winner Chris West dropped over a minute in his ex-Nigel Mummery Porsche 997 GT3 after a puncture picked up from flying rocks. Fitted with a new gearbox after its Donington dramas, he and co-driver Keith Hounslow know where future improvements lie.

"It's still not a flappy panel shift", said Hounslow, "so Chris is having to make a decision sometimes to be in the wrong gear to have both hands on the wheel to correct a moment, which is difficult!"

The same fate hurt Andy Scott as shredded rubber through a pothole meant his Fiesta dropped 10 minutes, Robert Swann's Subaru WRC unable to capitalise as he disappeared with apparent mechanical problems.

The dramas assured Kevin Procter's safe passage to fifth – despite a late flurry of donuts on the final stage – ahead of Charles Payne in their Fiestas, with David Henderson's sublime drive netting seventh in his Ford Escort Mk2.

Steve Finch (Ford), the recovering West and Paul Wedgbury's Skodaru rounded out the top 10, Wedgbury climbing through the field.

Among 20 Fiesta R5 machines competing, arguably the most unlucky was its newest convert, Paul Murro, who suffered a sensor problem exiting the 300 circuit's complex on SS1 that stymied the debut after his switch from a Ford Escort Mk2.



To the winner the spoils: Yates celebrated a narrow victory

RESULTS

Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship, Snetterton

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Rhys Yates/James Morgan	Ford Fiesta R5	50m35s
2	Frank Bird/Jack Morton	Fiesta R5	+14s
3	Mark Kelly/Neil Colman	Fiesta R5	+1m28s
4	Elliot Payne/Cameron Fair	Ford Fiesta	+2m12s
5	Kevin Procter/Dave Bellerby	Ford Fiesta S2000T	+2m35s
6	Charles Payne/Carl Williamson	Ford Fiesta WRC	+2m42s
7	David Henderson/Chris Williams	Ford Escort Mk2	+2m55s
8	Steve Finch/Sam Fordham	Fiesta R5	+3m17s
9	Chris West/Keith Hounslow	Porsche 997 GT3	+3m39s
10	Paul Wedgbury/Neil Dashfield	Skodaru Fabia	+3m42s

Class Winners: Yates/Morgan; Henderson/Williams; West/Hounslow; Josh Payton/Jamie Vaughan (Escort Mk2); Chris Ruck/Steve Harris (Opel Corsa S1600); Aaron Rix/Rob Cook (Ford Escort Mk1); Ryan Mone/Freddy Hewitt (Subaru Impreza); Christopher Newton/Anthony Newton (Vauxhall Nova).

CLASS ROUND-UP

Among the growing range of modern machinery, further down the classes it was two Ford Escort Mk2 drivers that gave the old guard their spot in the limelight.

A fine display from David Henderson throughout the day resulted in a clean sweep of stage wins and the additional reward of seventh overall to seal a crushing Class D victory – over two minutes clear of his nearest rival Martin Hodgson. Josh Payton's Escort also dominated in Class C to add another win to his name, both he and Henderson claiming maximum MN points in their respective classes.

Often imperious in Class A, Christopher and Anthony Newton enjoyed a slice of fortune on this occasion as they grabbed the class honours at Snetterton.

The rapid Vauxhall Nova pair were in recovery mode as the Nissan Micra of Kasla Nicklin shot off into the early lead, only for mechanical gremlins to end those hopes with retirement on SS4. Newton inherited the lead and doubled his win tally after a Donington victory in December.

The form man of Class B continued his steamroller. Chris Ruck's Opel Corsa again was the class of that particular group, doubling his win tally in a season where the title remains on his mind after a strong previous campaign.

Ryan Mone's Subaru Impreza narrowly pipped Stuart Cadman in a thrilling finish by 12 seconds in class E1, while Yates took class E2, taking crucial MN points from Bird in his title charge. Returnee Aaron Rix guided his older Mk1 Escort to class H success, although maximum MN points went to Terry Pankhurst's similar entry – finishing seven minutes adrift.



Henderson: class win



Newton won again

FEATURE

UNDERSTANDING THE NEW CHARGE FOR RALLYCROSS'S ELECTRIC DREAMS

Hal Ridge gets behind the wheel of the all-electric mixed-surface challenger that's set for the UK in 2021



Ridge behind the wheel of the STARD-developed machine



The direction change of the Fiesta impressed



Heading for the chicane and harnessing all the electric power

Motorsport News track tests are usually a voyage of discovery in the driver's seat but, to be completely honest, it wasn't the first time I had climbed aboard STARD's electric Ford Fiesta ERX Supercar.

I had driven STARD's world-first electric rallycross Supercar prototype – coded named HIPER – at former European Rallycross circuit Greinbach in Austria in 2017. Then, in late 2019 at the same circuit, I drove a sister car to the very Fiesta I sampled at Lydden Hill. The test in Kent was in the very latest iteration of the Manfred Stohl-owned firm's all-electric machines.

Although this latest version was not exactly the same as the one I drove in 2019 as STARD's technology has developed further still, I still knew that I had a head start with this particular article. The norm with track tests is that you climbing into a foreign environment, often at a new venue, and at least the early part of the running is about learning how to operate the car, and your way around whatever circuit. For this outing at Lydden, I know roughly how to operate the car and, more importantly, I had recent experience of driving a conventional internal combustion-engined Supercar at the same venue. That was perfect, as it would allow for direct comparisons to be drawn.

That's important because, for the first

time this year, electric cars will race as part of the headline Supercar category within the British Rallycross Championship 5 Nations Trophy and they will go against their petrol predecessors.

That news has been met by a mixed response from fans but, as I explained in a column in Motorsport News last month, having the potential opportunity for new commercial investment into British RX that more sustainable technology can bring shouldn't be sniffed at. In the current climate, it could be critical.

And that is especially when the electric cars – in the right hands – won't just be making up the numbers. In fact, as my experience at Lydden is about to show, it could be quite the opposite.

The Fiesta uses STARD's four-wheel-drive electric kit, part of its REVELution platform, which includes three 150kW motors (two at the rear and one at the front). Both axles are accompanied by a two-speed transmission and limited-slip differentials, while a 420V battery, motor controller and a VCU [vehicle control unit], help deliver an output of 450kW (603 horsepower) and 1100Nm torque. The kit has been designed to be retro-fitted to existing conventional Supercar bodysells, or built into new cars.

This Fiesta Mk8 is an evolution of the internal combustion-engined World Rallycross Supercar that STARD ran to podium success in 2019. It has, though, been reengineered so the suspension geometry, centre of gravity and weight distribution better

suit the electric application.

Climbing into the left-hand-drive driver's seat, aside from the panel hiding electronic wizardry on the passenger side and the high carbon unit next to the seat where the transmission tunnel would usually be, it feels almost like any other thoroughbred race car, until you look down and see only two pedals, that is.

There is another oddity though because in this machine there is no mechanical connection between the front and rear of the car. So, where the transmission tunnel would usually be and where the rear seats are, the battery is located in a T shape.

Engineer Philipp Thonet-Drechsel reminds me of the controls. I'm only getting a couple of laps today and it will be by driving onto the circuit from pre-grid, so I don't need to worry about all the variables for the start parameters.

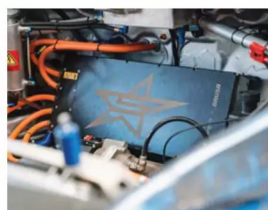
If I was to do a launch, I'd be having to do clever things like selecting how much of the total available torque I'd wish to use for both front and rear axles and work out the opinion percentage of throttle input for the start. That is in place, in part, to ensure that driver input can make a significant difference in all-electric races, rather than the process being fully automatic. Today, I'm driving in the settings used earlier in the day by company owner and test driver, World Rally Championship podium finisher Stohl.

Stepped in and ready to go, the first of two buttons to press on the centre console switches the system on, the second

Photos: Tiernay Oliver, Dan Bathie, Matt Bristow, Steve White



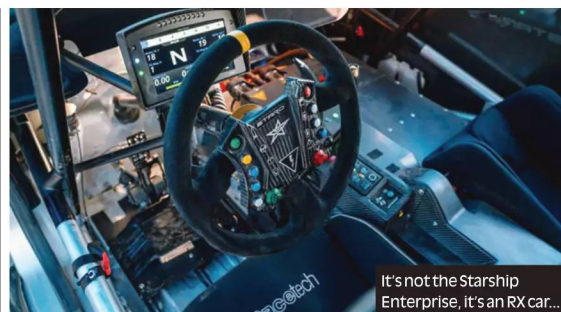
It's all for show, but there is lots and lots of go



STARD has developed the Fiesta



The internals are quite simplified



It's not the Starship Enterprise, it's an RX car...

TECH SPEC

Make: Ford	wheel drive, limited slip differentials	Tyres: Cooper crossply rallycross
Model: Fiesta ERX	Suspension: McPherson front and rear, five-way adjustable	Weight: 1480kg
Battery: 420v	Brakes: Four-pot callipers front and rear	Power: 450kW
Motors: 3x150kW, x1 front, x2 rear. 370 Nm peak, 13,500 rpm max	Wheels: 17in x 7in	Torque: 1100 Nm
Transmission: 1x front, 1x rear, two-speed, four-		Top Speed: 240kph
		Acceleration: 0-100kph in 1.8s



The STARD Ford Fiesta uses three electric motors for motivation

activates drive. Although only second gear will be required from the two-speed box today, the shift paddle behind the steering wheel is also where reverse is found and, by holding my foot on the brake just like driving an automatic road car, I push the paddle away from me with my right fingers. The 'N' changing to 'R' on the dash with just a small transmission noise and I reverse out of the awning.

The Fiesta glides almost silently through the paddock to pre-grid and, after a 10-minute wait during this general test day, it's time to head out on track.

Much like a conventional Supercar – which uses an anti-lag system to aid throttle response but should only really be turned on once moving – the Fiesta ERX has a 'race mode' button top right of the steering wheel-mounted switch panel. Having engaged forward drive and pressed said button, I head out onto the oldest rallycross circuit in the world.

Driving through the start grid I'm hard on the throttle heading towards the first corner. Whether in a 'normal' Supercar or in an electric machine like this the acceleration – from 0-60mph in around two seconds – is always amazing. Perhaps a little less surprising with experience but no less awesome and, being forced into the back of the seat on the run towards Chessons Drift takes me back a little.

I'm early on the brakes, cautious that I don't know how the brake pedal feels or how well the brakes will respond and have to get back into the throttle into the entry of the corner. Hugging the barrier tight on the inside, utilising the strip of smooth Tarmac amid the loose section, I plant my right foot on the throttle as the barrier ends the rear of the Fiesta stepping out slightly.

It's simply astonishing how quickly the trio of motors respond to inputs through the throttle pedal, and within milliseconds

the crossply Cooper tyres are scrabbling to deliver all of the total available torque into the track surface below.

Although the car is obviously quieter than an internal combustion-engined Supercar you can still hear the motors working hard, the whirring of the transmission and the sound of stones hitting the inside of the wheel arches. The rear dances slightly under what feels like endless acceleration, sling-shooting me towards the first true Tarmac corner, the right-hander of Devil's Elbow.

I again brake early with my left foot but the front of the car turns in nicely, clipping the kerb on the inside I'm able to be back hard on the throttle before the apex to drive up the hill, using all the of track width on the outside.

Into the hairpin at the top of Hairry Hill again the nose turns in well and I'm on the throttle in the entry phase to help the rear to rotate and head down towards one of the best corners in the rallycross world, Paddock Bend.

It's a slightly bizarre sensation not having to change up or down gear and, in the braking area for paddock where usually you would shift down at least cog or two on entry (which also would help with weight transfer), it's a different sensation only using the brakes to scrub speed. It means you have none of the friction usually created by a conventional transmission.

A little cautious through paddock, I stay hard on the throttle over the loose but take a small confidence lift through the fast

high-curved chicane to cross the finish line, the car riding both kerbs with ease.

For the second lap I push harder, and on long-right hand exit of Chessons Drift have to come out of the throttle briefly to bring the nose of the car back in line. At the top of the hill I turn in hard but don't get enough rotation done on entry and the Fiesta understeers wide. With a handbrake that works just like in a normal Supercar, by cutting drive to the rear wheels, I tug the vertical lever to the right of the steering wheel and the back swings round beautifully.

My right foot gets hard back into the throttle and the Fiesta slides sideways through the exit of the corner. It would have been faster to come off the throttle and kill the wheelspin I'm sure, but I'm not here to set lap times and it's far more fun to keep the drift going with an arm full of opposite lock, the car filling with tyre smoke.

It's a similar story through Paddock Bend for the second and final time. I turn in a bit later than the optimum line through the corner, chucking the car into the looser part of the track on the outside, the Fiesta sliding sideways on the loose, feeling very nicely balanced, despite being, at 1480kg, around 180kg heavier than a more conventional Supercar.

Overall, while the balance of the Fiesta ERX feels quite different – and in some places a little more nervous compared to my experience of testing and racing regular Supercars around Lydden – it is very impressive, and very quick too.

It's hard to gauge the actual speed without a datum like gear changes, but that evening I sit down to watch the onboard. With no timing at the test, I time with my phone's stopwatch.

When racing Team RX Racing's Ford Focus, a very good British RX car, in the final round of the British Championship last year at Lydden, on good tyres in the final, I set my best lap time of 44.759s.

Yes, the track conditions were damper in December than they were in the warm, dry conditions of early April, but timing my tidiest 'lap' of the Fiesta ERX run, from Devil's Elbow on lap one to Devil's Elbow on lap two, the time was approximately 44.580s. Give or take a few tenths, that's pretty close. As an offset, I'd been driving the Focus through a whole event, and while I'd only done one corner in the Fiesta by the time I started timing, it was on very worn tyres, so I'd say they're pretty close.

A driver with a pair of Supercars starts under his belt, Chris Hoy, touring car legend Matt Neal and one of the fastest rallycross drivers in the world, Liam Doran were among those who also tested the STARD machine at Lydden.

Hoy is working on a plan to join Natalie Barratt on the grid in a pair of STARD machines, and there are other drivers in talks too. With a driver behind the wheel of a STARD electric car with a similar talent to those at the front in 5 Nations BRX, I'm sure that ever that the electric cars will make big noise on the circuits this year. ■

"I enjoy the tyre-smoking opposite lock"

Hal Ridge



The Fiesta is a thrilling drive

COLUMNIST

MATT JAMES



MN editor says that Formula 1 needs to think carefully about its future

Photos: Motorsport Images, Jakob Ebrey



Norris vs Hamilton could have been so much better



Three letters that shouldn't belong in Formula 1

In Jimmy Roberts' excellent feature in *Motorsport News* on April 15, he outlined the huge changes that on the horizon for Formula 1 looking ahead to 2022.

The rulemakers in F1 have realised that the product is slightly broken and have pledged to fix it with a set of regulations that promise to revolutionise aerodynamics. That, in turn, will allow the cars to follow each other closely enough to perform genuine overtaking moves rather than the artificial Drag Reduction System passes we see at the moment (which, to my mind, have very little value). Annoyingly, DRS will remain, at least for the first season with the new rules.

Imagine the closing stages of the recent Emilia Romagna Grand Prix with cars that could actually overtake rather than relying on a flap in the rear wing. Think of what that battle between Lando Norris's McLaren and Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes could have been like without the aero aid that takes all the skill out of a passing move...

I would hope that DRS is consigned to the history books as soon as the new aero rules have proven to have worked properly. But the Formula 1 bosses haven't stopped at looking at the cars as they attempt to spice up the show.

Look at the tweaks they are plotting for the race weekends – sprint races and the now dead-and-buried plan for a two-day race weekend. It was money (or rather a lack of it for the individual race promoters through gate receipts) that scuppered the two-day weekend. That's not really a concern for a fan. But the sprint races are

something that are beginning to take the discipline down a slippery slope as far as I am concerned.

The plan is that it will set the grid for Sunday's race, which is a huge break from tradition.

It smacks as slightly artificial and if the cars were actually able to overtake during a two-hour grand prix, there wouldn't really be a need for it. And please could it follow option tyres and DRS into the dustbin?

Formula 1 is about the best cars and the best drivers racing uninterrupted to determine the winner. The energy recovery systems and the resultant power boosts they allow are fine: F1 needs to remain relevant to the wider world to make sure the investment stays healthy. But that is all it needs – mucking around with the sporting regulations could be a step too far.

And why not turn the spotlight on the circuits for better entertainment? Given the word limit for this page, don't get me

started. It is a whole new conversation.

There is a balance, though, throughout every aspect of the sport. Engineering expertise militates against close racing, and that is the tightrope that F1 has always walked. F1 needs to work out who it is trying to please? The boffins or the broader general public?

The tyres, push-to-pass and mixed up grids are commonplace in many other motor racing categories. Just think of the one we know best in the UK, the British Touring Car Championship, for example. There are option tyres, success ballast and reversed grids to cope with over the course of its 30-race campaign before a champion can be crowned.

It is hard to argue that the wrong driver has yet won the BTCC despite all these twists, but there is a huge difference here: the BTCC is an entertainment-driven class of racing. It thrives among its huge fanbase because it is almost made-for-TV sport.

Don't get me wrong, the drivers who take part take it very seriously. They aren't merely actors following a predetermined script, but competitors who go into the category with their eyes wide open.

Formula 1 is a different animal and it should have a different manifesto. It should be about the very pinnacle of everything: drivers, engineering abilities, speeds and technology. It should not be trying to stoop to scoop up the fans who switch off after lap 1 if there hasn't been a crash on the startline. Is that a purist's argument? Perhaps, but it is the opinion of someone who loves motorsport and understands what the ethos of each motor racing championship should be.



The BTCC is made-for-television entertainment

"Formula 1 needs to work out who it is trying to please in the long-term"

WHAT'S ON

YOUTUBE

Today (Thursday) marks a significant motorsport anniversary, and a sad one, as it is 19 years since the death of Rob Walker.

In our age of top-level motorsport dominated by manufacturers and astronomical budgets, the 'privateer' triumphing over all of them seems something from fiction. And in Walker's day beating the 'factories' wasn't much more likely. Yet Rob Walker Racing Team won

no fewer than nine Formula 1 World championship grands prix, and totalled plenty success elsewhere. And Walker moreover did it all with an inimitable style and charisma.

The Goodwood Revival in 2018 gathered, as the commentator puts it, "pretty much everything in the collection" for a special Walker cars' parade, the iconic Scots dark blue with a white noseband livery predominant. You can watch it all, preceded

by the Duke of Richmond's tribute speech plus a filmed Walker celebration, on YouTube at: youtube.com/watch?v=Uv8CYbXGo or via searching 'Humbling celebration of Rob Walker's illustrious career at Revival'.

And if you want more detail, Goodwood's YouTube account again has you covered with another film exploring the background of some of the machines, with Walker's son, daughter in law and several of



Famous Walker cars

the cars' owners contributing. That's at: youtube.com/watch?v=odU0_Yw9HA or from searching 'The history of F1's greatest privateer'.

Graham Keiloh

TV GUIDE

Spring is springing, Covid restrictions are (touch wood) relenting, and reflecting it all this weekend is a busy one for motorsport on TV, led by F1's Portuguese GP in the Algarve.

Yet to those of us with a historical bent, an early-season Portuguese Grand Prix means only one thing: Ayrton Senna in 1985 destroying all comers amid a deluge for his first F1 win. And Sky Sports F1 caters for us with highlights of it this evening at 2100hrs-2145hrs.

As for this year's race, Channel 4 has its usual highlights of qualifying at 1830hrs-2000hrs on Saturday and of the race at 1930hrs-2200hrs on Sunday. Sky Sports F1's coverage



Senna shows his skills

meanwhile again kicks off with the drivers' press conference, shown today at 1400hrs-1735hrs, then it's the weekend-preview F1 Show at 1800hrs-1900hrs that is repeated throughout the evening and tomorrow morning. Ted Kravitz's notebook reviews are on Saturday at 2100hrs-2130hrs for qualifying and on Sunday at 1800hrs-1830hrs for the race. Both are also repeated several times. And Eurosport has plenty to

LIVE TV

FORMULA 1 PORTUGUESE GRAND PRIX ALGARVE

■ **Practice 1:** Friday, 1100hrs-1245hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Practice 2:** Friday, 1445hrs-1630hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Practice 3:** Saturday, 1145hrs-1310hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Qualifying:** Saturday, 1400hrs-1630hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Race:** Sunday, 1330hrs-1800hrs, Sky Sports F1

supplement its live coverage of Saturday's Spa World Endurance Championship curtain-raiser, showing a hour's

WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP 6 HOURS OF SPA

■ **Race:** Saturday, 1215hrs-1430hrs and 1620hrs-1845hrs, Eurosport 2

INDYCAR TEXAS

■ **Race 1:** Sunday, 0000hrs-0300hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Race 2:** Sunday, 2200hrs-0030hrs, Sky Sports F1

NASCAR KANSAS

■ **Race:** Sunday, 1930hrs-0000hrs, Premier Sports 2

worth of qualifying at 1115hrs-1215hrs, plus showing race highlights on Tuesday at 2030hrs-2130hrs.

Graham Keiloh

LISTINGS

SATURDAY

■ **Mallory Park, Leics**
BARC meeting: FF1600, MGOC, Pickups, Northern Sports/Saloons Starts racing from 1320hrs (qualifying from 0930hrs) NO SPECTATORS

SATURDAY-SUNDAY

■ **Donington Park, Leics**
Donington Historic Festival: HGPCA, Formula Junior, Woodcote Trophy/Stirling Moss Trophy, Pall Mall Cup, GT40s, Historic Touring Cars, Pre-War Sports, Jaguars Starts Saturday, racing from 1325hrs (qualifying from 0910hrs) Sunday, racing from 1125hrs (qualifying from 0910hrs) NO SPECTATORS

■ **Thruxton, Hants**
CSCC meeting: Tin Tops, Swinging Sixties, Future Classics, Magnificent 7s, Modern Classics, Special Saloon and Modsports, Classic K, New Millennium, Open Series, Turbo Tin Tops, Slicks Series Starts Saturday, racing from 1255hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1325hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) NO SPECTATORS

MONDAY

■ **Castle Combe, Wilts**
CRCR meeting: FF1600, Saloons, GT, Hot Hatch, Mazda MX-5, BMW Car Club, Dave Allan Trophy Starts racing from 1240hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs) NO SPECTATORS

■ **Cadwell Park, Lincs**
CTA meeting: Miltek Civic Cup, Time Attack Starts racing from tba (qualifying from 0900hrs) NO SPECTATORS

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ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!



Graham Lomax's shot of the very first Thundersports entry at Oulton Park back in 1983



Dean Chilvers' pic of Guy Wilks' Peugeot



Stellar Goodwood line-up. By Robert Taylor



Classic at Snetterton, photo from Justin Ward



Brands Hatch battlers, taken by Gary Hill

NEXT WEEK

READERS' Q&A:

KELVIN FLETCHER

Emmerdale and Strictly star goes in front of the MN panel to tackle his toughest task



OUT THURSDAY, MAY 6

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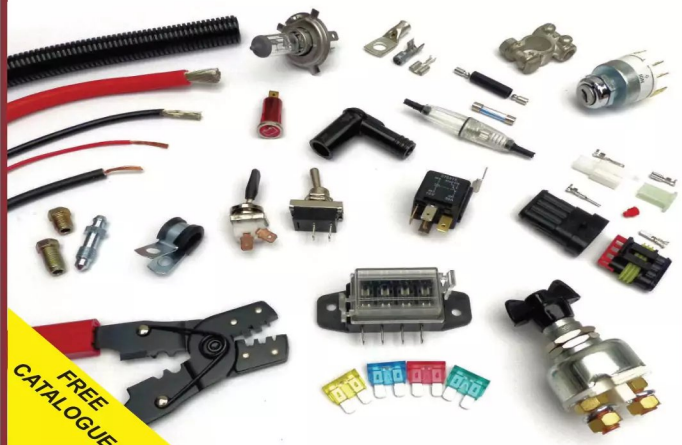
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